

THE
DEATH OF ABEL.

A
SACRED POEM,

IN
FIVE BOOKS,

ATTEMPTED FROM THE GERMAN OF

Mr. GESSNER



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THE TWENTY-EIGHTH EDITION.

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MDCCXCIII.

TO THE
QUEEN.

MADAM,

PERMIT me to lay at the foot of your throne this volume, which is an attempt to translate from your native language, a work deservedly admired. I am sensible it is but a faint representation of the glowing beauties of the excellent original ; yet I flatter myself, I have in some measure preserved the ideas, especially those which fill and warm the heart with the love of virtue. On this account, and on this only, I presume to hope for your Majesty's favourable acceptance of the work.

Placed by the hand of Providence at an humble distance from the great, my cares and pleasures are concentrated within the narrow limits of my little family, and it is in order to contribute to the support and education of my children, I have taken up the pen. Your Majesty's patronage will undoubtedly insure my success ; but I am far from hoping that you, Madam, will give your royal sanction to a performance that has no other merit to plead than the ill-judged, tho' affectionate industry of a fond mother. If I have attempted a task for which nature never designed me, it is just that disappointment should teach me humility and wisdom : and I bow without repining at the stroke.

Confined

Confined as my situation is, I shared in the universal joy visible on every countenance on your safe arrival. This general satisfaction was a most auspicious omen in the beginning of your reign. May you, Madam, ever feel the delight of giving joy to a brave and loyal people. May your exemplary virtues, united with those of our beloved sovereign, put wickedness to shame, and force vice to hide its head. May all ranks influenced by Royal precedent and the manners of your court, grow ashamed of licentiousness, inhumanity, profaneness, and dissipation. May the sincere gratitude and love of a reformed, united and happy people, render valuable the splendor of your public station, while domestic peace, conjugal felicity, and maternal love, fill with tranquil delight your more retired hours. May see with transport the rising virtues of a numerous progeny. May you, Madam, to use the patriarchal language of my author—May you full of days and full of glory, after having beheld your children's children flourish round you, late, very late, resign an earthly crown, to receive an everlasting diadem in the realms of bliss and immortality. These are the ardent wishes of,

MADAM,

YOURS and his MAJESTY'S

Most devoted and most obedient

Subject and Servant,

MARY COLLYER.

THE

AUTROR's PREFACE.

I Now attempt a more sublime subject than has hitherto employed my pen, from a desire of knowing whether my abilities are capable of being carried to a greater length. This is a curiosity which ought to influence every one. The public are too apt to discourage a young poet who has succeeded in one branch of poetry, and would confine him to that only in which he has once succeeded, as his *ne plus ultra*; as if that alone was the very thing in which he could shew the whole strength of his genius, when, perhaps, some external circumstance, or a mere accident, rather than any particular impulse, determined his choice.

Though a poet who ventures on the sublimer parts of poetry were not entitled to regard from the public, he would find himself amply rewarded in the happy execution of his voluntary task. To revolve in the mind a vast variety of matters, to trace the motives of actions to their original spring, to delineate characters, and through intricate occurrences, by degrees, to open interesting events, is attended with a thousand pleasures. To him nature is a magazine never to be exhausted, whence true genius collects every
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material

material that can embellish his favourite object; then is the whole mind exerted, and talents are awakened which would very probably have otherwise lain dormant and unknown.

But it will be said, at this rate, we shall have nothing to read but epic poems and tragedies. They who are suspicious of such a misfortune, should be informed, that when I say such compositions will give greater and more various pleasures than little pieces to the poet, I mean, they will also do the same to the reader. Few indeed have leisure or inclination for large performances; most men are taken up with employments of a different nature: many will chuse to pay their addresses to a less coy mistress than the epic muse; and I dare prophesy, we shall never be without master-pieces in every branch of poetry. Far be it from me to depreciate the light and sportive works of fancy; for though I wish for more Homers, I yet think Æsop and Anacreon cannot be too much admired.

Some will be astonished, and others offended, that I have taken for my subject a scripture history. The latter, I will suppose, are somewhat advanced in years, and have, by being immersed in business, and the desire of growing rich, being hindered from looking into new books; these have a zeal for the honour of their religion, and retain all their prejudices they imbibed in their youth against poetry, having drawn their knowledge of that divine art from specimens, which, a very few excepted, were neither worthy to be known or valued.

valued. A poet, in the times of their youth, was esteemed even by sensible Germans, only as a droll fellow, a kind of buffoon. But to those who have read the Bible with so little attention to its beauties, as to make a crime of this undertaking, I have nothing to say; they must be void of taste; and to reason with such would be as ridiculous as to carry a lanthorn before the blind. It is to those who are capable of reflection, I desire now to address myself. I would wish these to observe, that the works which caused poets to be considered in a contemptible light, were wrote in an age when poetry was wretchedly declining, and far from its original and genuine dignity. It has always been in the retinue of religion, and is of very great service to it, being the most energetic method of conveying sentiments of virtue and devotion. It affords a noble delight to the understanding, it improves the heart, and excites to whatever is becoming and praise-worthy. But to answer these valuable purposes, even when it relaxes and sports, its wit must be decent and pure, and have a tendency to create a contempt for ribaldry and profaneness. Poetry of the loose kind I despise and detest from my very soul.

Under the conduct of prudence, virtue, and good manners, poetry may be allowed to take its subject from the great truths of our holy religion. What can be more proper for the exercise of genius than the sacred history? As Christians we assent to its truth; as Christians we are equally concerned in its important events. The poet, if he has the happy

art of illustrating the characters he draws from divine history, with what is probable and pleasing, and placing them in an instructive view, will have an opportunity of conveying, in the clearest and most striking manner, the salutary influences of religion and piety into the hearts of all ranks of men, and will be read with pleasure by persons in every situation. If this be attempted by a head unequal to the task, such performances I allow, may do more harm than good; but is not this equally the case with all judicious expositions?

This liberty, with the sacred history, has been used in all nations; and among us, even at the time of the reformation, few were displeased with the dramatic pieces taken from the scriptures; these were publicly allowed, though their principal merit was the good intention of their authors, the poetry being far from elegant.

But a new objector starts up and cries, At this rate the Bible will become a mere fable. I would ask him if this has been the fate of profane history? Homer and Virgil took the subject of their poems from ancient history? but who ever thought of adjusting those histories by their poems? or who in reading their works, imagined them to be historians, or considered them in any other light than as poets?

There is yet another numerous set of people to whom I must pay my respects; These are they who are too excessively polite to relish heroes who have a sense of piety; who talk of religion, who are serious, and affect
neither

neither raillery nor wit. Characters drawn from those exhibited in the days of thinking, must make a strange appearance to those sons of fashion. Such manners! such conversation! to them my heroes will appear as odd creatures as those of Homer did to the French, who were offended that they were not Frenchmen. To these slaves of mode I would whisper it as a secret, that myself being young, and like them fond of applause, I will, in order to obtain their suffrages, which are of mighty importance to me, give this subject a new dress. I will introduce an amorous intrigue, for what is an epic poem without a love adventure? Abel shall be a languishing *petit maitre*; Cain, a rough Captain of the Cossacks, and nothing shall come from the lips of Adam, that is not in character from an hoary Frenchman hackneyed in the ways of the world.

THE

THE
TRANSLATOR'S

PREFACE.

THE work from which this is attempted, is written by Mr. Gessner, of Zurich in Switzerland. The rapidity of the sale does honour to the taste of the Swiss and Germans, it having passed through three editions in one year.

The subject is the Death of Abel, which is the most remarkable event recorded in the sacred history from the fall to the deluge. The poet has had the art to interest us in the distresses of our first parents and their immediate descendants, by the lively and affecting manner in which he manages the passions, and by the graces and truth he throws into his paintings, while he describes the simple manners of the first inhabitants of the earth.

All our author's works, of which this is the first that has been translated into English, are wrote in a kind of loose poetry, unhackled by the tagging of rhymes, or the counting of syllables. This method of writing seems perfectly suited to the German language, and is of a middle species between verse and prose: It has the beauties of the first, with the ease of the last. It is not however peculiar to Mr. Gessner; for in this manner the great Fenelon wrote his Telemachus, of which the public
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has been favoured with an elegant translation by the able hand of Dr. Hawkesworth.

Of this attempt I am not qualified to speak; were I to decry it I should certainly be arrogant and rude in offering it to the public, and to praise it would be presumption. But I will venture to say, that I flatter myself my copy has escaped any glaring deformity, though it may want many of the almost inimitable graces of the charming original. That painter must indeed be a dauber who could make a disagreeable picture while he attempted to copy a Raphael or a Titian. Such as it is I leave it to the candor of the reader, believing, that notwithstanding the loud cry of universal depravity, no one will, without just cause, and in mere wantonness of cruelty, condemn the assiduous efforts of a female pen.

THE

THE
DEATH OF ABEL.

BOOK I.

HENCEFORTH repose in silence, thou soft pipe; no more I render thee vocal, no more I sing the simple manners of the rustic swain. Gladly would I raise my voice to bolder strains, and in harmonious lay rehearse the adventures of our primeval parents, after their dreadful fall. Gladly would I celebrate him, who sacrificed by a brother's fury, had his dust first mingled with the earth. Come thou noble enthusiasm, that warmest and fillest the mind of the wrapt poet, who during the silent hours of the night, contemplates in the gloom of the thick grove, or at the side of a clear stream, glimmering with the moon's pale lamp; when seized by a divine transport, imagination takes her flight, and with bold wing traversing the region of created substance, penetrates into the distant empire of possibilities, discovering with clear view the marvellous that captivates, and the beautiful that enchants. Loaded with treasure, she returns to arrange and construct her various materials. Taught by reason to chuse and reject, she with a wise œconomy, admits only what forms

forms harmonious relations. Delightful employment! laudable constancy! I honour the bard, who to excite sentiments of virtue in the yielding heart, watches the nocturnal song of the grasshopper, till the rising of the morning star. Posterity will crown the urn of a poet, who consecrates his talents to virtue and to innocence: his reputation shall bloom with unfading verdure, while the trophies of the proud conqueror shall moulder in the dust, and the superb mausoleum of a tyrant shall stand unknown in the midst of a desert, where human feet have made no path. Few, it is true, who have ventured on these noble subjects, have received from nature the gift of singing well; but the attempt is laudable: to it I consecrate all my moments of leisure, and all my solitary walks.

The tranquil hours had just given Aurora the tint of the rose, and dispelled the vapors of the night that had hovered over the shadowy earth, while the sun, beginning to dart his first rays behind the black cedars of the mountains, tinged with radiant purple the half-enlightened clouds; when Abel and his beloved Thirza left their leafy couch, and repaired to a neighbouring bower, composed of interwoven jessamine and roses. The tenderest love and purest virtue shone with the mildest beams in the fine blue eyes of Thirza, and gave attractive graces to the carnation of her cheeks: with her fair locks, waving in ringlets on her snowy neck, and hanging with a becoming negligence down her back, added to the beauty of her form. Thus she walked by
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the side of Abel, whose high forehead was shaded with ringlets of the palest brown, reaching no lower than his shoulders. An air of thought and reflection was agreeably mixed with the sweet serenity of his looks, and he moved with the easy grace of an angel who charged with the gracious commands of the Most High, becomes visible to the enraptur'd faint in human form; but the veil he assumes is of such ravishing beauty, that through it shines the angel. Thirza, with a look of affection, and a tender smile, cried, O my love, now the birds awake, and begin to chant their morning song; let me hear the hymn you yesterday sung in these smiling pastures; let me also join in the rapturous employment of serving the Lord. The melody of thy lips inspires my heart with an holy transport, the sensations I feel, but am unable to express. Abel tenderly embracing her, replied, My lovely Thirza, instantly I will grant thy request. I no sooner read thy wishes in thine eyes, than with a lover's haste I strive to fulfil them. They then seated themselves in the fragrant bower, whose entrance was gilded by the morning sun, and Abel thus began:

Retire, O sleep, from every eye. Fly ye hovering dreams; reason again resumes her throne; again she illumines the mind, as the morning sun enlightens the fertile earth. We hail thee, resplendent sun, who dartest thy beams from behind the cedars; thy friendly rays give light and colour to re-animated nature, and every beauty smiles with new-born graces.

Retire,

Retire, O sleep, from every eye. Fly ye hovering dreams to the shades of night. Where are the shades of night? they have fled to the caves of the rocks; we shall find them there, and be refreshed by their coolness during the sultry heat of noon. See where the new-born day first wakes the eagle; where on the glittering summits of the rocks, and the shining sides of the mountains, the exhalations ascend and mix with the pure air of the morning, the smoke of the burnt-offering arises from the altar. Thus nature celebrates the returning light, and pays to nature's God the sacrifice of grateful praise. Praise him all things that exist; praise him whose wisdom and goodness preserved all. Ye springing flowers exhale the sweets he gave you in his praise. Ye winged inhabitants of the Grove, pour forth the warbling of your little throats to him who gave you voice and melody, while the majestic lion pays him homage with the terror of his mouth, and the caverns of the rocks resound his praise. Praise God, O my soul! praise God the creator and preserver. Let the voice of man reach thy throne, O Lord, before that of any other creatures: in the grey twi-light, at the dawn of the morning, while the birds and the beasts yet sleep, may my solitary song find acceptance, and invite the reviving creation to praise thee, the great Creator and Preserver. How magnificent are thy works, O God! wisdom and goodness are stamped on all. Wherever I turn mine eyes, I perceive the traces of thy bounty; each sense is transported, and con-

veys their infinite beauties to my ravished mind. O God, weak and frail as I am, fain would I attempt thy praise. What induced thee, Maker Omnipotent, for ever happy in thyself, to call from nothing this gay creation? What induced thee, thou self-existent, to form man out of the dust, and to give him the breath of life? It was thine infinite Goodness, Thou gavest him being, that thou mightest confer on him happiness. O smiling morn! in thee I see a lively image of the work of the Great Creator; when the sun disperses the vapors of the earth, and drives night before his steps, all nature revives with renewed lustre. The Almighty spoke; Darkness fled, and Silence heard his voice: he commanded, and myriads of living creatures emerged from the teeming earth, fluttered in the air with variegated plumage, and rendered the astonished woods vocal with the praises of the beneficent Creator. Earth again hears the voice of her Almighty Maker; the heaving clods rise in innumerable shapes, and burst into life and motion. The new-formed horse bounds o'er the verdant turf, and neighing shakes his mane: while the strong lion, impatient to free himself from the cumbrous earth, attempts his first roaring. A hill teems with life; it moves: it bursts, and from it stalks the huge unwieldy elephant. These are thy works, O thou Omnipotent! Each morn thou callest thy creatures from sleep, the image of non-existence; they awake surrounded by thy bounties, and join unanimous to chaunt thy praise. The time will come, when thy praise shall

shall resound from every corner of the peopled earth, when thine altars shall blaze on every hill, and man shall celebrate thy works from the rising to the setting day.

Thus sang Abel, seated by his beloved Thirza. He ceased; yet she, filled with a divine transport, seemed to hear. At length encircling him in her snowy arms, while her eyes beamed tenderness, she cried, O my love! the music of thy lips raises my mind to God. Thy endearing care not only protects my feeble body, but under thy protection my soul takes her flight: thou art her guide amidst the obscurity of doubt and darkness; thy wisdom dissipates the clouds, and turns her astonishment into devout extasy. How often have I inspired by Gratitude, rendered thanks to God Most High, for having created me for thee, and thee for me. O my love! unanimous in every wish were we formed to bless each other.

While she spoke, conjugal tenderness diffused inexpressible Graces on every word and every Gesture. Abel remained silent, but his softened look, while he snatched her to his bosom, and the tear just starting from his glistening eye, spoke unutterable love. Thus happy was the man, thus pure his delights; the fruitful earth refreshed and fitted him for action by her bounties. Contented with necessities, he asks of heaven only virtue and health. Luxury and discontent had not yet filled him with insatiable desires, which inventive of numberless wants, bury happiness under a load of splendid miseries; an union
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of heart there formed the nuptial tie. No fear of wasting penury, or the frown of a tyrannic parent; no low ambition; no want of land or Gold then kept the soft maiden from the fond bosom of the youth she loved. These cares are thy Gifts, O Luxury!

Abel and Thirza were still seated, when Adam and Eve entered the bower: they had listened with delight to the song of Abel, and had heard Thirza vent the effusions of her fondness. They now embraced their children while their hearts expanded with parental affection, and a lively joy glowed on their cheeks.

Mahala, Cain's spouse, had followed the footsteps of her mother, and had been witness of the happiness of her brother and sister: her pure mind was freed from envy, baleful passion! Yet dejection sat on her countenance, a mild languor appeared in her eyes, sorrow had faded the bloom once seen on her now pallid cheek. She had heard Thirza express her gratitude to heaven for having been created for Abel, and he for her: their mutual tenderness forced tears from her eyes, and sighs from her pained bosom, while sad remembrance drew the comparison between the two husbands: But soon wiped away the pearly drops, and with a graceful smile entered the bower, where, with cordial affection, she saluted her brother and sister.

At the same time, Cain passing by the fragrant shade, had heard Abel's melodious voice, and had beheld his delighted father tenderly embrace him. At this sight envy fixed her envenomed

envenomed sting in his heart, and he, giving a furious look at the bower, cried, What signs of joy are here, what fond caresses! I too might sing, were my days like his, spent idly reclining in the shade, while the flocks were sporting, or cropping the green herbage: but I am not made for singing. Rugged labour is my inheritance; though I turn the Glebe, tho' I break the stubborn earth, curst for my father's sin with barrenness, yet my fatigues meet with no such fond rewards: did my soft brother but toil like me one day beneath the scorching sun, it would spoil his music; he would trill no songs.—What more embraces! how I hate this effeminate dalliance! but if that fair youth be pleased, no matter what I hate.

Cain then, with hasty steps, walked on; he had been overheard, and his discontent had filled the happy family with deep concern. Mahala became still more pale, and dissolving in tears, sunk down by the side of Thirza; while Eve reclining on her husband, lamented the obduracy of her first-born. O my much-beloved parents, cried Abel, I will follow my unhappy brother, I will embrace him, and say whatever fraternal love can dictate to engage his affections. I will try every art of persuasion to make him forget his anger. I will not leave him till he promises to love me. I have searched into the very bottom of my soul to know by what means I may regain him, and find a way to his heart. Sometimes I have kindled his extinguished love; but
alas!

alas ! too soon the gloom returns, and sullen sadness damps the sacred flame.

With troubled look Adam answered, I myself, my beloved Abel, will go to your brother. Reason and paternal love shall unite their force to combat his obduracy. He will not surely resist the authority and tenderness of an afflicted father ! O Cain, Cain, with what torturing cares dost thou fill my heart ! The tumult of tyrannic passions has chased from thy soul every sentiment of love and virtue. O sin ! fatal sin ! terrible is the desolation thou spreadest in the human breast. What gloomy presages torture my sad bosom, when I look thro' futurity, and behold its ravages among my unhappy offspring. Thus spake the father of mankind ; Grief sat heavy on his venerable brow. He left the bower, and with hasty step sought his first-born.

Cain beheld him coming, and ceasing from his labour, thus began : What means this sternness in my father's look ? it was with no such air of severity thou camest to embrace my brother. Why do thine eyes reproach me ?

Thou wouldst not, my son, have read reproach in my eyes, returned Adam, wert thou not conscious thou deservest reproach, and thy offended father is come to thee in all the bitterness of Grief.

Without any love, interrupted Cain, that sensation is reserved for Abel.

With love also, resumed Adam, heaven is my witness, I love thee with a father's fondness. These tears, these inquietudes and
anxious

anxious cares that agitate me, and no less her who brought thee forth with pain, have their source in the most affectionate love. 'Tis this tender love and concern for thy happiness, that casts a Gloom over our days; 'tis this love that causes the silence of the night to be interrupted by our sighs and lamentations. O Cain, Cain! didst thou love us, it would be thy most earnest care to dry up our tears, and to dispel that cloud of Grief which darkens our days and fills them with horror. Ah! if thou still retainest in the breast any regard for the omniscient Creator to whom the inmost recesses of thy heart are open: if the least spark of filial love to us thy parents remains in thy obdurate soul, I conjure thee by that regard, and that love, to restore to us our lost peace. Restore, O my son, our extinguished joy. Nourish no longer against thy brother who loves thee with a sincere affection, this ruthless hatred. He longs to embrace thee; gladly would he clear from thy mind the tares of discontent with which it is over-run. O Cain, thou wert my first-born, the beginning of my strength. When thy infant eyes opened to the light, I beheld thee with all the father in my heart. Wherefore then is thy soul disquieted? Why does envy dwell in thy bosom, because I rejoice too in thy brother: His refined and exalted piety drew from us tears of joy, and we in the sweet transport, caress'd him. The angels who surround us applaud every good action: the Almighty himself looks down from heaven's high arch, and regards with complacency the grateful offerings
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of a thankful heart. Would thou change the invariable nature of beauty and Goodness? this is not in our power, and if it were, Cain, how must we be depraved before we could wish to withstand the noble joy, the tender, the exquisite feelings, that high raised devotion and exalted virtue create in the enraptured soul. Darkness, storms, and the thunder of heaven call forth no gentle smile on the human countenance; as little do the agitation of boisterous passions cause joy to spring up in the human heart.

Cain sternly answered, Is reproach then all I am to hear from a father's lips? If my face does not wear a pleasing smile; if tears of tenderness do not follow each other down my cheeks, am I for this to be branded with detestable vices? Born with more firmness, bold enterprizes and severe toils have ever been my choice. Nature has stamped on my forehead a manly Gravity. I cannot weep or smile at every trifle. Does the towering eagle coo like the timorous dove?

Adam with majestic Gravity returned, thou deceivest thyself: thou harbourst in thy bosom horrid sentiments that will rankle in thine heart, and render thee wretched if they are not stifled. O Cain! it is no manly Gravity that is stamped on thy brow; it is envy, sorrow, and gloomy discontent. These are seen in thine eyes; the disturbance of thy mind is visible in thy whole deportment. This inward dejection, O my son! has spread a cloud over all thy prospects. Hence arise thy continual murmurs, thy peevishness and passion during

during the labours of the day : hence the black melancholy, to which thou art a prey. Tell, Oh, tell thine affectionate father, what will give thee ease. It is his ardent wish that thy days may pass serene as the vernal morn. What cause hast thou O Cain ! to be disquieted ? Are not all the springs of happiness open to thee ? Indulgent nature offers to thee all her beauties. The good, the useful, the agreeable, are not they thine as well as ours ? Why then dost thou leave the blessings of heaven untasted, and complaineft of wretchedness ? It is because thou art dissatisfied with the portion of happiness the divine bounty has been pleased to bestow upon fallen man ? Is not every blessing the undeserved Gift of infinite Goodness ? Dost thou envy the lot of angels ? know that the angels were susceptible of discontent, and by aspiring to become Gods, forfeited heaven. Would thou arraign the dispensations of the Most High towards his sinful creatures ? While the whole creation in universal concert praises the Creator, shall guilty man, a worm sprung from the mud, dare to lift up his head, and carp at him whose infinite wisdom regulates the wide expanse of heaven ; to whom all futurity is present, and who, by his unerring providence, can cause evil to be productive of good ? Be chearful O my son ; cast from thee this sadness and discontent ; let it no longer disturb thy thoughts ; no longer throw a frightful Gloom over the natural serenity of thy countenance. Open thine heart to every social affection, and look

with grateful complacency on all the innocent pleasures which nature displays before thee.

What need of all these exhortations ! cried Cain, do I not know, that, was my heart at ease, every thing around me would give me delight ? but can I silence the storm, or bid the impetuous torrent flow in a placid stream ? I am born of woman, and from my nativity sentenced to misery. On my unhappy head the Almighty has poured forth the cup of malediction. It is not for me nature displays her beauties, nor do the streams of bliss, of which you take such plenteous draughts flow for me.

Alas ! my son, said Adam, with a voice rendered almost inarticulate by his strong emotions and his tears : 'tis but too true, that the divine malediction was pronounced on all born of woman : but why, O why shouldest thou believe that God has poured on thee our first-born more of wrath than on us the first transgressors. No this is not, this cannot be the case ; sovereign goodness contradicts it. No my dear son, thou wert not born for misery ; the beneficent Creator never called any of his creatures into being to render them unhappy. Man may indeed, by his own folly, make himself wretched, if he suffers his reason to yield to impetuous passions, ignorant of true felicity, he may render his life a burthen, and convert what is naturally good and salutary into a destructive poison. Thou canst not silence the storm, nor stop the rapidity of the torrent ; but thou canst dispel the clouds of discontent that obscure thy reason, and restore

store to thy soul its original light. Thou canst force into subjection every impetuous passion, every irregular desire. Gain, O my son, this noble victory over thyself, and it will refine thy sentiments: thy whole soul will be illumined: darkness and distress will vanish like the mist of the dawn before the solar ray. There was a time, my dear son, when I have seen thee even shed tears; when from the gratulations of conscience, joy hath spread itself through all thy powers; delightful fruit of virtuous actions! I refer it to thyself, Cain, wert thou not then happy? was not thy soul like the clear azure of the heavens, unclouded and unspotted. Recover that beam of the deity, Reason: let her clear light direct thy steps, and virtue her inseparable companion, will restore joy and permanent felicity to thy purified heart. Listen, O Cain! and comply with the advice of thy father. The first injunction that reason lays on thee is to embrace thy brother. With what joy will he receive thy endearments! with what tenderness will he return them!

Father, replied Cain, when at the heat of noon I rest from my labour I will embrace him. I cannot now leave the field. I promise I will obey thee, and embrace my brother: but—while I breathe, my firm soul will never be dissolved to that effeminate weakness which so endears him to you, and makes your eyes run over with transport. To a softness like this we all owe the curse denounced against us. When in Paradise, you weakly suffered yourself to be overcome by a woman's
tears.

tears. But what do I say. Dare I reproach my father? no my venerable parent, I reverence thee, and am silent. Thus spake Cain, and returned to his labour.

Adam remained motionless, with his hands and eyes raised to heaven: at length in a tone of deep distress, he cried, O Cain, Cain! I have deserved these cutting reproaches; but Should thou not have spared thy father? Should thou not have forborn this cruel charge, which, like a clap of thunder, shakes my tortured soul? Ah me! thus will my latest posterity, when immersed in sin, they feel the pangs inseparable from guilt, rise up against my dust, and curse the first sinner.

Having thus spoke, Adam with pensive eyes fixed on the earth, slowly withdrew. The groans that burst from the agitated bosom of the afflicted father, now struck even this obdurate son with remorse, and he cried, gazing after him, what a wretch am I, how could I reproach so good, so tender a parent? how have I loaded him with grief! I still hear his groans—I see him lift his supplicating hands to heaven—Perhaps, vile as I am, he prays for me; for me who have torn his heart with keen distress, O that I too could pray; but I am a monster—Hell is in my bosom, and like a ravaging whirlwind, I destroy the peace of all around me. Return, O reason, return; return O virtue, chase from my troubled soul these wild and darkening passions;—Still, still he prays. O how his emotions reproach me, His claspt hands are again raised in agony; he seems

seems spent. I will at his feet implore his pardon. O my rash tongue—my rebellious heart!

Cain then ran towards Adam, who was leaning against a tree, with his weeping eyes fixed on the ground: He threw himself on the earth, and cried, Forgive me, forgive me, O my father! I deserve thou should'st turn from me with abhorrence. I abhor myself; but while I am thus humbled before thee in the dust, while I thus grasp thy knees, despise not my repentance; despise not my tears. My hardened heart resisted thine exhortations with a fullen pride: but O my injured father; thy distress and thy Groans have melted my obdurate soul. A beam from heaven has enlightened my benighted mind. With unfeigned sorrow and deep contrition I see my folly, I see my guilt, I know that I am unworthy of thy love. Yet, O my dear and venerable parent! reject not these penitential tears—reject not the sincere submission of my heart: O my father, I implore pardon of God, of thee, and of my brother. Rise my son, rise, cried Adam, affectionately embracing him, and raising him to his bosom: the most high, who dwelleth in the heavens, beholds with complacency these tears of repentance. Embrace me my son, and receive thy joyful father's forgiveness and cordial embrace. Blest time, happy hour, in which my son, my first-born restores our tranquility. My dear child! joy excess of joy has weakened all my powers, support me my son, and let us hasten to thy brother, that my satisfaction may be compleated, by beholding your mutual endearments.

Adam

Adam leaning on Cain, walked towards the pastures. Abel, with his mother and sisters, met them in the Grove; they had followed Adam at a distance, they had seen his emotions, and with delight had beheld the tears and repentance of Cain. Abel, the moment he saw his brother, flew to him with open arms: he clasped them around with a strenuous grasp, unable for some time to give vent, but from his eyes, to the sweet effusions of his heart.—At length he cried, O my brother! my dear brother!—thou then lovest me——lovest me with fondness—let me hear thy lips pronounce that thou still lovest me, and my happiness will be complete. Yes, my brother, answered Cain, while he prest him with a warm embrace, I do indeed sincerely love thee. May I hope thou wilt forgive my having so long embittered thy days by my unkindness, and the fury of my boisterous passions? I too my brother, was unhappy, but reason, like the rapid flash of heaven, broke through the Gloom, and has dispersed the baleful tempest. Never, Abel, never mayest thou remember my former darkness.

The delighted Abel with encreased rapture replied, never my dear Cain! be the past utterly forgotten. Who would dwell upon the distressful illusions of a morning dream, when they might like me awake to real happiness, surrounded by multiplied delights? my dear brother! words have not power to express my transports—to express the sweet joy with which my soul is filled, while I thus press thee, my friend, my brother, to my throbbing heart.

Eve,

Eve, who with tender delight beheld the moving scene, sprang to her sons, and throwing her maternal arms round them both, while delicious tears of joyful sympathy ran down her cheeks, cried, O my sons, my dear beloved children! never did I, since I have borne the tender name of mother, feel such rapturous sensations. The griefs, which like the weight of a cumbrous mountain oppressed my soul, are now removed. My heart will be no more torne by the unhappy disagreement of those I carried in my womb, and nourished with my breast. I shall now see—transported I shall see peace and harmony, joy and love dwell among my happy offspring. As the fruitful vine is blest by the thirsty labourer, when refreshed by its delicious fruit, so will my now united children bless me as the instrument of their felicity. Let me, my sons, join you in this sweet embrace; let me too, my daughters, press you to my bosom. With what joy do I participate in this unspeakable ecstasy, visible in the faces of my children, and on that of my much-loved husband! she then turned towards Adam, her matron lip met his, while conjugal tenderness and parental love were seen blended in her still glistening eye.

The beauteous sisters, though silent, shared the general rapture. Mahala, Cain's spouse, when disengaged from her mother's fond embrace, said, while vivacity and joy sparkled in her altered features, Let us, my dearest Thirza, chuse the fairest flowers, to deck our bower, delightful seat of peace and happiness!

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We'll strip the bending branches of their luscious to form their rich repast. This day, this happy day, we will, with united hearts, welcome the new-born joy. She then, with nimble feet, followed by Thirza, ran to prepare the sweet refreshing banquet.

Adam and his spouse, attended by their sons, walked slowly on; ere they had reached the bower, the active sisters had bespread the green carpet; fruits of various sorts offered their juices, while variegated flowers lent their odours, and cheered the eye with their bright tints. The feast was elegant, but it was the elegance of nature: no darts of death hid in rich fauces, struck with unhospitable blow the unthinking guest. Contentment sat on every face; in every eye beamed sweet complacency. Social converse and unmixed delight, gave rapidity to the flight of time, while the unheeded hours brought on mild evening.

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THE
DEATH OF ABEL.

BOOK II.

WHILE the first family of the world were in the bower indulging domestic bliss, the father of mankind thus spoke : It is now, my children, you experience the delight of self-approbation. The recollection of a good action, diffuses a pleasing serenity through the soul. Nothing, my sons, nothing but the practice of virtue can render us truly happy. Virtue makes us capable of the enjoyments of those pure spirits, who surround the throne of God. While we follow the dictates of reason, while we enjoy the Gratitude and love, the blessings of nature, and have humble hope and confidence in God our Maker, we anticipate the delights of heaven : but if we suffer our passions to degrade and subdue us, inquietude, distress, and misery will darken all our prospects ; in vain will the fruitful earth pour forth her bounties. Believe my dear children ! believe a father, made wise by his

own fatal experience, the joys of sin are followed by shame, sorrow, and bitter repentance. O Eve, continued Adam, once the dear partner of my distress as now of my happiness, could we have thought, when with streaming eyes, and hearts torn with anguish, we took leave of Paradise, that so much felicity was to be found on earth? Never will the horrors of that dreadful hour be effaced from my mind. My father, returned Abel, if the recital of past Grievs will not be displeasing: if the recollection will not throw a Gloom on this happy hour of reconciliation and joy, glad would I hear from thee the events of thy life, from the fatal moment to the present time.

All looked on Adam with the eye of expectation: all seemed pleased with the request of Abel, and the first of men replied. What, my children, can I refuse in this joyful gratulation? I will relate to you the principal occurrences of those times of affliction and Grief, of consolation and mercy, when God, even that God whom we have offended, deigned to cheer by his promises, fallen man. Where, O Eve, dear companion in every woe and in every delight! Where shall I begin the interesting narrative? Shall it be on our first leaving the Garden of God?—But I see thy tears already flow. My tears, returned our general mother, are now those of thankfulness and humble love, not the bitter ones of shame, sorrow, and sad regret. Begin, dear Adam, at my taking a last look on the forfeited seat of bliss. In that dreadful moment

moment shame and remorse for the past, and agonizing fear for the future, raised such a conflict in my wretched bosom, that I sunk into thine arms, wishing for the immediate execution of a threatening, that was to confound me with my original dust. What I then felt, permit me to describe. Thy tenderness for me, will, I know, make thee pass too lightly over the melting scene.

The angel of the Lord, on whose countenance shone benignity and soft compassion, was commissioned to drive us out of Paradise. He soothed us with gentle words, cheered us with promises, and bid us hope and put our trust in the clemency of our All-merciful Creator; but the sword in his hand flamed terrible. At Eden's gate he stopped. I guard, said he, this passage: no more must enter here aught that defiles. We were now travellers on the vast earth: Paradise was irretrievably lost; the country we crossed seemed one wide and dreary desert; no fruit-trees, no flowery shrubs, no fertile spot cheered our sad eyes. Adam held my hand, I frequently cast despairing looks toward the seat of lost felicity, not presuming to raise my guilty eyes to the victim of my folly, and companion of my misery. Sorrow bent his head to the Ground, and we walked on distressed and silent. Adam surveyed with anxious eye, the uncultivated earth, then cast a pitying look at me, and to soothe my overflowing sorrows, gently pressed me to his breast.

We had ascended an high hill, and now going down the declivity, every step diminished
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ed our view of Eden; my heart was rent with agony, and my Grief deprived me of motion. Now, now, cried I, sobbing, I behold, for the last time, Paradise, my native soil: blest seat of innocence and joy, for the last time I behold thee! Ye flowers once cultivated by my careful hand, Who now enjoys your sweets? What eye is charmed by your bright colours? Ye trees who now shall prop your loaded branches; who now shall taste your rich produce; delightful bowers farewel—farewel dear shades; no more shall these sad eyes behold your verdure, banished for ever from those sweet retreats! 'Twas there dear partner of my sin and shame! thou askedst of heaven an help-mate to double and to share thy bliss. Alas! thy prayer was granted, and thine own side produced thy ruin. Our maker formed us pure and spotless; while innocent, the happy spirits, who behold the face of God, deigned with complacency to visit our blest abode; deigned to instruct us in our duty; to warn us of our danger. What are we now? dreadful degradation! O Adam! thy perfidious wife has involved thee, by her seductions in sin and sorrow. Yet dear accomplice, to whom with awe I raise my pitying eye, do not hate me. Thou hast a right to curse me; but, O dear spouse! if I may still call thee by that tender name, use it not: for thou art my sole support. By that God which we have offended, by the chearing promises of his indulgent Goodness, I conjure thee not to forsake me. All I request is that I may follow and serve thee.—I will watch thy looks—I will

will anticipate thy commands ; happy, if my obedience, my weak services, gain from thee a pitying smile, a look of soft compassion.

Here my strength and voice failed, I was sinking to the earth ; but my dear husband caught me in his arms, and pressed me with a look of affection to his heart. O Eve, he cried, whom I still and always will, tenderly love, let us not heighten our keen distress by self reproach. Our God, in the midst of punishment, has remembered mercy. He has softened his chastisements by his promises. Veiled as these promises are in sacred obscurity, the Divine Goodness appears with sensible radiance, and we will hope in his mercy. We will not reproach ourselves, we will not reproach each other. O my dearest ! had our God only consulted his just indignation, where should we have been now ? We will praise him for his Goodness, our lips shall bless his name. Our voice shall be heard in thanksgiving, humble supplications, and expressions of endearment and love. Our Judge is omniscient, with him there is no darkness. He sees the humiliation of our souls : He beholds our Gratitude, our sincere contrition : He knows our weakness, and will accept of our feeble efforts to regain perfection. Embrace me my dearest wife ! let us, by mutual tenderness, and acts of kindness, endeavour to alleviate our calamity. Adam ceased speaking. His words and tender caresses gave ease to my oppressed heart, and strength and activity to my enfeebled limbs. We proceeded to the bottom of the hill, where we found a
Grove

Grove of poplars, which extended to the foot of a rock.

Eve, then given her husband a look of affection, was silent, and Adam thus continued :

We advanced, my children, through the Grove, and found in the rock a cavity that formed a grotto. See, dearest Eve, said I, see the convenience offered by nature : this grotto will afford us shelter, and this pure spring, that murmuring flows from its side will shake our thirst. We'll here prepare our lodging : but my dearest wife, before we sleep, I will secure the entrance, to prevent our being surprised by nocturnal enemies. What enemies ? returned Eve, with emotion ; what enemies have we to fear ? Hast thou not remarked, my love, said I, that the curse of our sin has fallen on the whole creation ? the bands of friendship are broken between the animals, and the weak are now become the prey of the strong. I have seen a young lion pursue with fatal rage a frightened roe. I have beheld a war in the air among the birds.

We can no longer claim a right to command the animals : the spotted leopard, the brindled lion and fierce tiger, no more fawn on us, nor play their wanton gambols in our sight ; but cast against us frightful roarings, while their blazing eyes threaten destruction. We will try to gain by our kindness those among the beasts that are most tractable, and Providence has given us reason, which will teach us to secure ourselves from the most savage.

Eve with timid looks, keeping me in her sight, went to gather flowers and leaves to
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form a bed, and fruit for our repast. In the mean-time I secured the entrance of the Grotto with entwined brambles. My spouse hastened by fear, quickly performed her task, and returning rested herself before me on the tender Grass.

We soon after entered the Grotto, and seated ourselves on our bed of intermingled leaves and flowers, began our frugal meal, seasoned however with mutual endearments and grateful converse; when a gloomy cloud suddenly obscured the declining sun. It spread over our heads with increasing darkness, and the black veil which covered the earth seemed to presage the destruction of all nature. A tempestuous wind arose; it bellowed in the mountains; it overthrew the trees of the forest: flames darted from the clouds, and loud bursts of thunder augmented the horrors of the tremendous scene. Eve, struck with terror, threw herself, scarce breathing, into my arms, and clinging to my breast, cried, He comes! in flames he comes to bring the threatened death:—How dreadful—For my sin he comes to give death to all nature!—O Adam—O my love:—Here her voice failed, and she remained trembling and pale on my bosom. Be calm, my love, I cried, compose thyself, we will with bended knees and contrite hearts, adore our God, who in terrible majesty comes riding on the clouds. His thunders proclaim his approach; the darting fires mark his passage. O thou Eternal, who with benignity and Goodness temperedst the insupportable radiance of thy dignity, when I first came
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from thy creating hand, thou art terrible in judgment, yet suffer us not to be consumed by thy wrath. Destroy us not, O God, in thy hot displeasure.

We then prostrated ourselves at the entrance of the Grotto, and with pale countenances and trembling lips, offered up our adorations, expecting when our awful Judge would, from the clouds, pronounce by his thunders, Die ye ungrateful! and let the earth that bore you be dissolved by the fire of my indignation.

The clouds now poured forth their torrents: lived flames no longer flashed from the heavens, and the thunder rolled at a distance, I raised my head from the Ground, saying, The Almighty, my dearest Eve, hath passed by. He hath not destroyed the earth: we are yet permitted to live: he hath remembered his promises; Eternal Wisdom, Everlasting truth repenteth not. He will fulfil the designs of his mercy, and thy seed, O Eve! shall bruise the head of the serpent.

We arose and were comforted; the heavens resumed their brightness, and the setting sun spread a mild radiance through the sky, like the luminous track we used to behold in Eden, when legions of angels were carried above our heads in the flying clouds. Silence reigned over the moist fields, the herbage and flowers, still glittering with the drops, glowed with more than usual beauty. The departing sun darted on us his last beams, while we celebrated with reverential awe, and thankful love, the wisdom, power, and mercy of our Creator.

Thus

Thus passed the first day after our leaving paradise. The ruddy evening gave place to twilight, and soon the earth was only enlightened by the moon's feeble rays. We now the first time were chilled by the cold of the night, though a few hours before we had almost fainted under the ardent rays of the scorching sun at noon. Our beneficent Maker had condescended to gird our loins with the skins of beasts, before our leaving paradise, to show that he had not withdrawn from us his succouring hand; in these we wrapped ourselves, and lying down on our leafy bed, hand in hand, waited the approach of sleep.

Sleep, the relief of the weary, at length came, but it was unaccompanied with that soft ease, that sweet delight, that blest our slumbers while innocent: our imagination then presented none but smiling and agreeable images. Inquietude, fear, and remorse did not then keep us waking the tedious hours of darkness, nor mingle in our dreams fantastic phantoms. The heavens were however calm, and our rest undisturbed: but oh! how different from that delicious night, when I led thee, my spouse, for the first time to the nuptial bower! The flowers and odoriferous shrubs charmed with new sweetness. Never was the warbling of the nightingale so harmonious: never did the pale moon shine with such radiance:—But why do I dwell on images that awaken my Grief, now hushed to silence?

We slept till the morning sun had dried up the limpid dew. When we awoke we found

ourselves refreshed and fit for labour, and enjoyed with delight and Gratitude the harmony of the birds, who were celebrating with their sweetest notes, the renewed light ; their number was yet but small ; for there were then no other animals on this earth, but those who instructed by divine instinct, had after the fall, fled from Paradise, that the Garden of the Lord might not be defiled by death.

We offered up our adorations at the entrance of the Grotto ; after which I said to Eve, we will my love, go farther and view this immense country : our all-merciful God has given us liberty of choice. We may fix our abode where the earth is most fertile ; where nature is most profuse of her beauties. Seest thou, Eve, that river, which, like a huge serpent, winds in bright slopes through the meadows. The hill, on its bank, seems, at this distance, like a Garden full of trees, and its top is covered with verdure. My dear spouse, returned Eve, pressing my hand to her bosom, I shall follow with delight the steps of thee, my Conductor and Guard. We will pursue our walk towards the hill.

We were going on when we saw, just above our heads, a bird fly with feeble wing : its feathers were rough and disordered : it cast forth plaintive cries, and having fluttered a little in the air, sunk down without strength among the bushes. Eve went to seek it, and beheld another lie without motion on the Grass, which that we had seen before seemed to lament. My spouse stooping over it, examined it with fixed attention, and in vain, tried

tried to rouse it from what she believed to be sleep. It will not awake, said she to me, in a fearful voice, laying the bird from her trembling hand—It will not awake!—It will never wake more! She then burst into tears, and speaking to the lifeless bird, said, Alas! the poor bird that pierced my ears with cries, was perhaps thy mate. It is high—It is I! unhappy that I am, who have brought misery and Grief on every creature! For my sin these pretty harmless animals are punished. Her tears redoubled. What an event, said she, turning to me, how stiff and cold it is; it has neither voice nor motion. Its joints no longer bend, its limbs refuse their office. Speak Adam, Is this death? Ah it is—how I tremble! an icy cold runs through my bones. If the death with which we are threatened is like this, how terrible! What, dearest Adam, would become of me, if, like the feathered mate of this poor bird, I am left behind to mourn? Or what of thee, if death tear me from thy fond arms? Should God create another Eve to fill my forfeited place in thy loved bosom, she will not—cannot love like me, thy partner in distress and banishment.—Unable to say more, she wept, she sobbed, and her expressive eyes, tenderly fixed on mine, made my feeling heart partake her anguish. I pressed her to my breast: kissed her cheek, and mixed my tears with hers. Cease dearest Eve, I cried, these fond complaints. Dry up thy tears: have confidence in the Supreme Being, who governs all his creatures by his infinite wisdom. Though we cannot penetrate into
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the designs of his providence; though his majestic tribunal is surrounded by darkness, we may rest assured, that mercy and love remain near his throne. Why, my love, should we anticipate misfortunes? Why should we, guided by a gloomy imagination, seek for them in futurity? Was our reason given us only to make us wretched? Shall we ungratefully turn our eyes from the repeated instances of the loving kindness and tender mercy of our God, at the hazard of plunging ourselves into misery by our blindness? It is his wisdom and his goodness that regulate and appoint what shall befall us. Let us with humble confidence proceed under his direction, and devoutly acquiesce in his appointments, without seeking to know what he hath not condescended to reveal.

We now advanced to the eminence. Its gentle ascent was almost covered with bushes and fertile shrubs. On the summit, in the midst of fruit-trees, grew a lofty cedar, whose thick branches formed an extensive shade which was rendered more cool and delightful by a limpid brook, that ran in various windings among the flowers. This spot afforded a prospect so immense, that the sight was only bounded by the dusky air; the sky forming a concave around us, that appeared wherever we turned, to touch the distant mountains. Here, said I, my dearest love, we will fix our abode. This spot is a faint shadow of Paradise, whose blissful bowers we must never more behold. Receive us majestic cedar under thy shade, Ye trees of various taste and

and hue, refresh and sustain us with your delicious fruits: never shall we gather the sweet produce without Gratitude: it shall be the reward of our attentive care and laborious cultivation. O God omnipotent, who reignest in heaven! look with a propitious eye on this our dwelling. Lend an ear of compassion to the supplications, receive with favour the praises and thanksgivings which we thy frail offending creatures, shall never cease to send up towards thy celestial throne, through the spreading branches of these trees. Here my dearest wife, we shall obtain, by the sweat of our brows, our support. Under these shades, thou shalt bring forth with pain. From hence will our offspring spread themselves over the wide earth. Here too, death shall one day visit us, and we shall be confounded with our original dust. O Lord God our Maker! shower down thy blessings on the profane abode of us sinners. While I thus uttered the devout breathings of my soul, Eve was prostrate on the earth by my side: her hands were elevated: her eyes swam in tears, and were raised to heaven in holy extasy.

I now began to construct our habitation under the shade of the spreading cedar. I fixed in the earth a circle of strong stakes, and interwove them with flexible twigs. While I was thus employed, Eve was conveying the stream among the flowers; gathering ripe fruits; supporting with small sticks, the bending stalks of the variegated shrubs, and pruning their luxurious branches. Then it was that we began to eat our bread by the sweat of our brows.

I went to the river to fetch reeds to cover our cottage: there I saw five ewes, white as the southern clouds, and with them a young ram, feeding by the side of the water. I approached them without noise, fearing they would fly me, like the tiger and the lion; who, before our fatal transgression, used to play with the kid or the lamb at our feet. But instead of endeavouring to escape me, they suffered me to stroak their fleeces, and I drove them before me, with a reed to our hill, where I intended they should for the future feed. Eve was busy in erecting a bower, and did not immediately, on my return, observe my little flock; but they soon discovered themselves by their bleating. She started at the sound, and dropped the boughs from her hand through fear: but soon recovering, she cried with joy in her countenance. O Adam! they are gentle and fond as in Paradise. Welcome, pretty animals, ye shall live with us: All ye want is here: Ye need not stray; for here are flowery pastures, fragrant herbage, and a clear spring. Your innocent sporting will give us delight while we attend our trees and flowers. Yes harmless creatures! she continued, patting their woolly backs, ye shall be my flock, and I will be your indulgent mistress.

Our little dwelling was now completed, and we were enjoying the cool breezes at its entrance, and silently surveying the distant country, when Eve said, My dearest love, how beautifully is the prospect before us variegated! how fertile, how full of blessings is
this

this earth which we thought so barren ! Let us to the fruits and flowers, which the hill already yields, add those that grow on its borders, and our abode will have a faint resemblance of Eden's delightful shades. Ah ! she added with a sigh, it will then bear but the same proportion of likeness to Paradise, as that does to the blissful seats of the angels, which the heavenly messengers, who in our happy days of innocence, condescended to visit us, described in such glowing colours. O thou Garden of the Lord, how delightful were thy sweet retreats ! how did thy gay tints charm the eye ! how did thy luscious fruits, thy aromatic fragrance feast the senses ! Whatever necessity required, all the useful, all the agreeable, were there in rich profusion. O my spouse ! compared with that luxurious spot, what is all about us but dry sterility ? This earth under the divine malediction, seems unable to produce in the same land that sweet variety, that happy diversity that charmed us in Eden's bowers. We must now seek the different productions in distant places. I have seen too, that not only animals are the prey of death ; he stretches his wide domain, he tyrannizes over the whole earth, and makes rude havock in the world of vegetation. O Adam ! what fruits have I beheld drop from their branches, spoilt, and full of black rottenness ? What flowers wither on their stalks ! The trees are disrobed of their verdure by the despoiler Death. I have observed too, that young leaves supply the place of those that are fallen, and that the seeds of dead
G flowers

flowers cast into the earth produce new ones. We Adam, must thus one day wither and die, and our children shall successively grow up and flourish.

She ceased speaking, and I, deeply affected by her words, made answer : Dear Eve were our loss only the gay verdure, the fruits and flowers of paradise, it would scarce deserve a sigh : but alas ! we are expelled from the sacred spot which our Maker bless'd by his immediate presence. There veiling his unsupportable radiance, he walked among the Groves, while all nature celebrated the approach of the Deity in reverential silence. Though formed of the dust, my prostrations were accepted. The Almighty condescended to hear his creature, and vouchsafed to answer, with benignity, a frail worm. Alas ! we have, by our disobedience, lost this privilege ; guilty as we are, we can no more hope to converse with infinite purity. This calls for our lamentation and our tears. Will the God of heaven visit a land under his curse ? Will the Most High dwell with sinners ? He looks down from the seats of bliss ; he regards with an eye of compassion our penitence and tears, and his bounties exceed every hope that our wretchedness could form. Even the bright spirits of heaven are his messengers ; they execute his orders on the dark Globe : but alas, our polluted eyes are unworthy to behold them ! They perform the task assigned, without deigning to become visible to sinful man, and then soar with hasty wing, from this seat of corruption, now fit only to be the residence of beings under the curse of their Sovereign.

Thus

Thus we were holding converse, and casting our melancholy eyes on the country before us, when a resplendent cloud descending, glided towards us, and rested on our hill; from it stepped a radiant form, wearing on his face a majestic smile. We hastily arose; we bowed our heads, and the celestial messenger thus spoke: He whose throne is in the highest heaven, has heard your complaints. Go, said he, and inform those children of affliction, that my presence is not circumscribed in the circuit of heaven, it extends to all the works of my hands. Whence has the sun his invigorating heat? Who teaches the stars to run their courses? Why does the earth bring forth its fruit, and day and night regularly succeed each other? Who preserves the various animals? In me they live, move, and have their being. What keeps thee, Adam, from sinking into corruption? I am near thee, I sustain thee by my power, I guard thee by my providence, and now the secret breathings of thy soul, and all the purposes of thine heart.

The luminous sphere that encompassed the angel, reached even to me. Filled with devout extasy, I lifted up to him my dazzled eyes. . How great beyond conception, said I, are the favours of the Lord! He beholds our our wretchedness with compassion; he sends his angels to give us comfort. O effulgent spirit! I stand confounded and abashed before thee. How shall I, sinful man that I am, dare to speak to thee, the unoffending messenger of heaven, arrayed in light and purity? Yet O benevolent angel, permit me to mention
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the sad apprehensions and fears that oppress my heart. That God is every where present, I readily believe: I see him in his works, I feel him in his goodness and tender mercies. That the Most High, a Being perfect in purity, should more intimately communicate himself to a worm defiled with sin, I do not presume to expect. What I dread is, that when man shall be multiplied on the earth, he will be estranged from God his Maker. I have fallen, my children may also fall—fall into more horrid depths, and thus being more and more debased, their wretchedness will increase. The time will come, when I shall be no longer with them to inform them, and give in my own person, evident proof of the loving kindness and compassion of the Lord. 'Tis true the smallest insect will declare the beneficence; but if God continues to hide his face from man, will not the voice of nature be too weak to strike his mind! Will not the idea of the Deity be totally lost, or at least be confounded in darkness and obscurity? This thought gives my foreboding heart exquisite anguish! I tremble with horror, when my gloomy imagination represents to my view millions of creatures sunk in Distress and Guilt, who may execrate me as the cause of their blindness and misery.

Father of men replied the angel, with an aspect benign, He in whom, and by whom all things exist, will not forsake thine offspring. Often will they, by their transgressions, presumptuously affront the majesty of heaven. Often will their sins call aloud for vengeance.

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The Almighty will grasp his thunder, and display the terrors of his judgments. The guilty shall tremble in the dust; the sinner shall cry out in agony, Dreadful is the wrath of God! Who can stand before it; but more often will he make himself known in kindness; he will delight to shew mercy to the repenting children of men; mercy and compassion dwell always with him; judgment is his strange work.

He will raise from among thy posterity men whose minds he will enlighten. They, assisted by the spirit of God, shall call their brethren to repentance. Sinners shall hearken, and forsake the ways of sensuality and profaneness, shall worship a Being of spotless purity, in spirit and truth. He will send among them prophets and holy persons, whose mission he will evidence by miracles: these chosen of the Lord shall cure the diseased, raise the dead, and do many wonderful works. These shall make known the judgments of the Most High: they shall declare his condescension and Grace: they shall foretel what will happen in distant periods of time, and the accomplishment of these prophecies will teach men, that the Eternal overrules and directs, according to his good pleasure, and the merciful designs of his providence, events that appear, to short-sighted mortals, the work of a blind chance. Often he will speak to the sons of men by his angels; frequently in prodigies, and there will be some righteous persons to whom he will, with infinite Goodness, more intimately manifest himself; to them he will speak face to face, till at length shall be ushered in, the
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great mystery of the salvation of mankind, when the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

The angel was silent, and I, encouraged by the condescension and sweetness of his look, replied, O celestial friend! if thou wilt yet allow me, frail as I am, to call thee so: and why should I doubt it? since thou canst not hate him whom the eternal does not hate—him for whom the divine clemency manifests itself with such splendor as strikes the heavenly host with admiration, and surpasses the power of words to express, when the adoring soul, humbled in the dust, attempts to pour forth its Gratitude. Tell me lucid spirit, if it be permitted thee to withdraw from the obscurity, with which they are surrounded, those august mysteries; tell me what is the import of the promise, The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; and what is meant by the curse denounced against man, Thou shalt die. Nothing that the Most High permits me to reveal, answered the angel, will I hide from thee.

Know then, O Adam! on thy transgressing the divine command, God said to the happy spirits who worship before him, Man hath disobeyed me; he shall die. A dense cloud suddenly encompassed the eternal throne, and a deep silence reigned through the whole expanse of heaven; the celestial host were filled with consternation; but soon the darkness dispersed, and the praise of the Highest again resounded from the harps of angels. Never did God manifest himself with such lustre
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and magnificence, but in that memorable instant, when his creative voice called the stars from non-existence, and his almighty word went on creating through the immensity of space. The adoring angels were in eager expectation of what was to follow this unusual pomp, when the majestic voice of God sounded through the arch of heaven, uttering these words of benignity and Grace; I will not withdraw my favour from the sinner. To my infinite mercy the earth shall bear witness. Of the woman shall be born an Avenger, who shall bruise the head of the serpent. Hell shall not rejoice in this victory. Death shall lose its prey. Ye heavens shew forth your Gladness! Thus spake the eternal. The blaze of his Glory would have been too strong for even the eyes of archangels, had not a thin cloud tempered its insupportable radiance. The blest inhabitants of heaven celebrated with joy this great mystery, and attuned their Golden Harps to the praises of the Father of Spirits, whose tender mercies are over all his works. How God will pardon the sinner, without offending his justice, surpasses comprehension: But it is enough, Eternal truth hath said it. We know and thou mayest also rest assured, that death, having lost his power, can only disengage the soul from its bonds. The body, that vesture of earth, shall return to the dust, of which it was formed, while the immortal spirit, refined from all defilement, shall be raised to heaven, to partake there with angels, archangels, and all the celestial host, never ending felicity.

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Hear Adam the order of thy God : I will be gracious to thee, and to thy seed. There shall be a sign between me and thee as the seal of this great promise : thou shalt build an altar on this hill, and offer on it a young lamb. I will, on my part, send down to consume the victim. This sacrifice thou shalt renew every year, and the flame shall annually descend to burn thine offering.

I have now told thee, first of men, continued the angel, all that the Most High thinks proper to reveal of his inscrutable decrees. I am also allowed to shew thee, that ye are not so solitary on this Globe as ye imagine. Curst as the earth is, ye are still surrounded by pure spirits, who are commissioned to be your guard and defence, and ordered to preside, with watchful care over the works of nature. The angel then touching our eyelids, we beheld beauties that I shall not attempt to describe. No words could give Ideas that would do justice to the bright magnificence of the scene. All the country around us were peopled with children of Heaven, more beautiful than Eve when she first came from the hands of her Creator, and with soft reluctance and modest Grace, received her welcome in my harms. Some were employed in collecting the light mists that issued from the moist earth : they bore them upwards on their expanded wings, and converted them into mild dews, and fertilizing showers. Others lay reclined, near purling brooks, watching lest their sources should fail, and the plants they watered should be deprived of their humid ailment.

ailment. Many were dispersed through the open country, who presided over the growth of fruits, and spread upon the opening flowers azure, green and red, with every vivid hue, and by breathing on them, impregnated them with fragrance. Some peopled the Groves employed in various offices: from the glittering wings of these wafted gentle breezes, which, passing through the foliage of the trees, hovered over the flowers, and skimmed along the surface of the brooks and lakes. Some among these celestial labours having performed the task assigned them, were sitting in the shade joining in harmonious concert: the melody of their voices accompanied the sounding strings of their Golden Harps, and they sang to the praise of the Most High, hymns, not to be heard by mortal ears. Not a few were walking on our hill, and among our bowers: in their gentle looks I beheld commiseration of our distress: but now our eyes again became unable to behold the heavenly effulgence, and the rapturous scene disappeared.

These which you have just beheld, said the angel, are spirits which are commissioned to watch over the productions of the earth; they are appointed assistants of nature, and help to promote and complete her various works, according to the invariable and immutable laws of the great First Cause. The Creator has given existence to innumerable orders of beings. Even this earth, though under the curse of the Most High, is full of beauty, and admiring angels behold, on this Globe, objects too su-

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blime for mortal fight. The delightful employment of some of these children of Heaven, is to watch over thy safety, O Adam! to avert from thee unforeseen misfortune. They assist thee in all thy labours, and often turn thy disappointments to thy advantage; bringing from an apparent evil a real Good. They with pleasure behold thy domestic happiness. They are witnesses of thy most secret actions. A smile of benevolence shews their joy when man, their charge, acts right: the frown of disdain and sorrow sits on their brow, when he forgets himself and his happiness. These, in future ages, the Lord will employ to distribute plenty through the countries he will delight to bless, or to carry famine and desolation among rebellious nations, when it shall please him to recall them by his chastisements.

The angel ceased speaking. He cast on us a look of mild condescension, and was lost to our eyes in a shining cloud. We prostrated ourselves on the earth with devout extasy, and humbly offered up our thanksgiving to our beneficent and all-merciful Creator.

I immediately set up the altar, as the Lord had commanded, on the summit of the hill; Eve employed herself in constructing around it a little paradise. She brought from the neighbouring plain the most beautiful and odoriferous flowers; those she planted on all sides of the altar, and with chearful labour watered them each morning and evening, from the clear stream that flowed near our dwelling. O tutelar angels, said she, in the midst of her labour, complete the works of my hands; for
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without your aid, in vain shall I plant; in vain shall I water! may your kind cares, bright spirits, give these flowers more life, more beauty, more fragrance, that they find in their native soil; for to the Lord of All this soil is consecrated! I planted a spacious circle of trees around the holy altar, and their thick branches spread an awful shade, that disposed the mind to devout contemplation.

In these occupations we passed the summer, exposed each day to the scorching sun. Autumn arrived and repaid our labour with its various fruits. It drew near its close: the loud blasts of the North began to be heard, and the tops of the mountains were covered with an hoar frost. Not then knowing that the weak earth, exhausted by the profuse liberality of summer and autumn, wanted to recover her strength by the rest of winter, we saw with Grief the saddened face of nature. In Eden we knew no change of seasons: mild spring, gay summer, and plenteous autumn charmed there together. As the winter advanced, the face of nature wore encreasing Gloom: the flowers withered on the stalks, and if any yet survived around the altar, they seemed, with drooping head, to mourn their approaching fall. The latest fruits fell from the trees, and the sapless branches cast their leaves. The clouds poured down torrents of rain, and the highest peaks of the mountains were covered with snow. We beheld this scene of desolation with fear and anxiety. Should this dearest Eve, said I, be only the first effects of the curse pronounced against

this earth, and God continue to punish, she will be stripped of the small remains of utility and beauty which her degradation has left her: small were they in comparison of the delights of paradise; yet they were sufficient to soften our toil, and afforded us many of the conveniences and blessings of life; but if the Divine malediction continues to spread destruction on this earth, how gloomy will be our days? What will become of our promised offspring? Thus did we mourn our melancholy situation; but encouraged by the promises of our God, we placed in him an humble confidence. We endeavoured to console each other, and to drive from our minds every thought of murmuring or discontent, and thankfully adored the Lord, in the midst of the dreary horrors, by which we were surrounded.

We laid up for our winter support, those fruits that had escaped corruption and rottenness; and that they might still be preserved, dried them by fire. I covered our cottage anew, and made a closer fence around, to keep out the cold and rain. In the meantime our little flocks languidly wandered on the eminence, gaining a scanty support by nipping the short Grass that still remained, or here and there sprung up afresh, and I for their farther relief, ranged the country to seek them fodder, which I carefully preserved, lest they should perish if the rigor of the winter increased.

Sad and slow passed our days, while the clouded sky poured forth rain, and the bleak winds

winds chilled us with cold. But at length the Genial Sun re-animated the earth, and brightened the heavens, while gentle winds chased the moist fogs from the summit of the mountains. Reviving nature smiled at the return of youth: the fields were again cloathed in chearful Green: innumerable flowers decked the pastures, and seemed to vie with the sun in lustre: the trees again began to shoot out their buds, and all nature was full of new-born joy. Thus crowned with leaves and flowers, came amiable spring, that delightful morning of the year.

The trees with which I had surrounded the altar were pre-eminent in beauty. Eve saw, with inexpressible rapture, the flowers she had planted on the holy spot recover their bloom. In vain, my children, should I attempt to give you an idea of our joyful extasy. We ran to the consecrated circle, filled with devout Gratitude. The sun illumined the sacred spot with his purest radiance. Every creature seemed to join in our praises of the Creator. The flowers exhaled the sweetest odours; the trees extended the shade of their blossoming branches, over the holy altar: the winged insects that inhabited the tender Grass, chirped forth their joy! while the birds on the spreading boughs of the trees, enlivened our devotion by their mellifluous harmony. We cast ourselves on our knees: tears of Gratitude and joy burst from our eyes, fell on the Grassy Turf, and mingled with the dew of the morning. Our fervid prayer ascended toward the Lord of Nature, the God of Grace,
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and Goodness, who had mercifully turned even the effects of his just displeasure, to our advantage.

I now began to cultivate a little field upon the hill. I cast into the fertile earth some Grains which I have produce of autumn. I even enriched the land with seeds I had gathered in the distant country. Nature, chance or reflection often discovered to me means to facilitate my labour. Often too, ignorance of the seasons, and of the proper soils for the different productions, led me into errors. Frequently my imagination deceived me, and I was disappointed when I had high hopes that I had found the art of contracting my labours.

I should sometimes have been without resource, had not the gentle spirits, who watched over my happiness, condescended to enlighten me.

One morning as I cast my eyes towards the altar I beheld with awe, the flame of the Lord burning over it. The rising sun, gilded with his beams the ascending smoke. Enraptured I called to my beloved; See my dearest Eve, I cried, see the accomplishment of the promise. Behold the sacred flame is come down on our altar. Let us go to it immediately. Every labour must now cease. I will, as the Almighty hath commanded, kill a young lamb. Haste, my love, and chuse the finest flowers to strew the sacrifice. I took the best of my flock; but my children, it is impossible to give you a description of what I felt, when I went to deprive the innocent animal of life. A trembling seized my hand, I was scarce
able

able to hold the struggling victim, and never could I have brought myself to give it death, had not my resolution been animated by the express command of the Author of Life. The very remembrance of its endeavours to escape gives me pain. When I beheld its quivering limbs the last moments of its existence, an universal tremor shook my own; and when it lay before me, without sense or motion, dreadful forebodings invaded my troubled soul. In obedience to the divine command, I laid the bleeding lamb on the altar, and Eve scattered on it odoriferous flowers. We then prostrated ourselves on the earth before it, with reverence and fear, and offered up our humble praises to the God of Truth, who had thus solemnly verified his promises. An awful silence reigned around us, as if nature celebrated the presence of her God. In this perfect calm our ravished ears were charmed with the minstrelsy of heaven. The angels that hovered over us joined in our devout praises. The flames soon consumed the sacrifice, and on its extinction, which was sudden, an aromatic odour diffused itself thro' the far extended country.

A little after this solemn day of reconciliation, I was going, at sun set, to rest myself, after the fatigue of the day, near my beloved. I ascended the hill. I sought for her in vain in our cottage. I looked for her with anxiety, in the shady bower. At length I found her, pale, and without strength, at the side of the spring, and thee Cain, our first-born, lying on her bosom. The pains of child-birth had
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seized her, while she was at her ordinary labour, near the brook. She was bedewing thine infant face with tears of joy. At the sight of me, she cried, with a smile, I salute thee, father of men. The Lord hath assisted me in the hour of distress: I have brought forth this son, to whom I have given the name of Cain. O thou dear first-born! said she, the Lord hath favourably regarded the hour of thy birth; may all thy days be consecrated to his praise? How weak, how helpless is he that is born of a woman! Mayest thou, dear infant, rise like a young flower in the spring! May thy life be a sweet perfume offered up to heaven! I then took thee, my first-born, in my arms.

I salute thee, said I to Eve—I salute thee mother of men. The Lord be praised who hath assisted thee in the hour of thy distress. I saluted thee, Cain, as the first of human beings, who gave pain to thy mother: first of human race who entered into life, to leave it by death. O God, continued I, look down from thy throne, and regard with compassion, this thy feeble creature. Shed thy gracious benediction on the morning of his life. It shall be my delightful task to instruct his young mind; I will shew him the miracles of thy grace: I will teach him the wonders of thy love. Morning and evening his infant lips shall be taught to sound forth thy praise. O dearest Eve, mother of men I cried, in the transport of my heart, a race without number shall flourish around thee. The myrtle was like thee, solitary, till the tender suckers sprung

sprung from the maternal root. When mild spring shall clothe it with new verdure, the first shoots will produce others, and in time this single myrtle will form a little aromatic Grove. In the same manner, (let this prospect console in thy present weakness) shall our offspring multiply around this eminence. We shall soon, from its summit, see their peaceful dwellings adorn the plain; we shall see them, if death delay his approach so long as to permit us—we shall see them lend each other mutual assistance, to gain the provisions, the conveniences, and the sweets of life. Often will we descend from the hill to visit our children's children, and under their fertile shades we will recount the wonders of the Lord, and exhort them to piety and Gratitude. When they taste of joy we will share it with them, we will sympathize in their Grievs, and give them consolation and advice. From the top of this ascent we shall see, with Gratitude and Joy we shall see, a thousand altars smoke around. Their burnt-offerings shall envelope us in sacred clouds, through which our fervent prayer shall ascend to the great Creator, in behalf of the human race. And when the solemn day shall come, when the flame of heaven shall descend upon the first and most holy altar, they shall assemble on this hill. We will lead them to sacrifice, and in holy transport we shall behold the fruit of our loins form around us a vast circle of prostrate worshippers.

Thus, O Cain did I utter the sweet effusions of my heart. I kissed thine infant lips with
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the most tender joy. Thy mother then took thee in her enfeebled arms, when having assisted her to rise, I led her to our dwelling.

Strength and vigour soon began to animate thy little members. Laughter and Gaiety sparkled in thine eyes, and mirth played on thy cheeks. Already wert thou able to run with thy tender feet on the soft Grass, and among the flowers: already thy little lips began to lisp forth thine infant thoughts, when Eve brought into the world Mahala, thy spouse. Full of joy you skipped about the new-born, kissed her and covered her with flowers. Eve at length brought forth thee, O Abel! and afterwards Thirza thy companion. With inexpressible joy we beheld your innocent pleasures. Our light increased as we saw your young minds unfold themselves, and arrive by little and little at maturity. We employed our most attentive care to cultivate your mental powers, to direct your thoughts to worthy objects, that your lives might diffuse the agreeable odour of virtue. Thus a variety of flowers, combined by art, form the fragrant nose-gay. While you my children, yet prattled on my knee, or chased each other through the Grove in wanton play, I discovered that man, born in sin, need cultivation like the stubborn earth, cursed for our transgression; and that vigilance and watchful care were necessary in the arduous task of forming the mind, "To teach the young idea how to shoot," to guide the pliant heart from the turbulence of the passions, to make the powers and noble inclinations of the soul bring forth their

their genuine fruits, Virtue and Piety require all the teacher's art—all the parent's love.

I have now, my beloved children, the happiness to see you arrived at your full growth, as the tender plants are by the hand of time transformed into lofty and wide spreading trees. Praised be the God of Heaven for his innumerable mercies! adored for ever be his name for his unmerited Goodness; may you my dear offspring, by your filial love, humble Gratitude, and devout reverence, continue faithful to him; and may the Grace and Benediction of the Most High always rest on your dwellings.

Adam here finished his recital. A nymph united by the soft bands of Hymen to her favourite swain, wanders with him in the early dawn. They hear the sweet notes of the nightingale, while all is silence around. Her voice seems the echo of their own fond thoughts, and through their souls is diffused a tender transport. The bird ceases her melody; but they still listen with the ear of expectation turned towards the branches from whence she chanted her nocturnal song. Thus, though our general father ceased to speak, his children remained fixed in mute attention. The different scenes he had represented gave them various emotions: sometimes the gushing tear dropped from their eyes, at others a lively joy spread itself over their features. They all returned thanks to the father of men; Cain returned his as well as the others; but he alone had neither smiled nor wept.

THE
DEATH OF ABEL.

BOOK III.

ADAM having finished his relation, Abel again tenderly embraced his brother, and they all left the bower, each pair taking their way to their separate dwellings, while the moon's mild rays enlightened their steps. O my Thirza, cried Abel to his beloved, pressing her hand, what exquisite joy diffuses itself through my soul! my brother is no longer estranged from me, he loves me: his moistened cheek spoke his tenderness, while he gave me the fraternal embrace. How did my heart rejoice in the sweet effusion of his returned affection! less delightful, less refreshing, is the evening dew that falls on the parched earth, after it has been scorched by the sun's burning rays. The furious tempest of his soul is calmed, peace and love are returned: they will again take up their abode in our humble cottages, and give new sweets to every enjoyment. O thou Beneficent Being! who hast with infinite Goodness watched over our parents when they were the sole inhabitants of this spacious earth, keep far from the heart
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of my beloved brother, every baleful and tormenting passion. May the storm never return; but may tranquility, gratitude, and joy render every day delightful like the past!

Thirza, with a delight in her countenance, said, Our parents, my love, felt not more joy at the return of spring, after the rigours of the first winter, than they experienced when they saw the tears of reconciliation drop from the softened eyes of our brother. Our affectionate father, our fond mother, seemed in their transport to have recovered all the gaiety of youth, and every thing around us smiled with new joy. Thus did the amiable and virtuous pair express the sweet sensations that filled their hearts.

Mahala, Cain's spouse, observing that his brow still wore the Gloom of discontent, pressed his hand to her lips, and in soft and tender accent, said, why my love, dost thou seem so cold, so insensible in the midst of such happiness? Is the calm that is restored to thy soul incapable of enlivening thine eyes with tender joy. Cannot thy heart-felt satisfaction render thy countenance serene? I should fear the cloud of Grief, that has so long darkened thy days, had rendered thee unable to taste of joy, had I not beheld ecstatic delight, content and transport animate thine eyes when thou gavest our brother the fraternal embrace. O my beloved! the eternal from his throne on high, and the benevolent angels who surround us, saw, with approbation, the soft sensations that then filled thine heart. Suffer me, my dearest spouse, to press thee to my bosom; let

let my fondness again light up joy in thy countenance: mayest thou lose all thy cares in this sweet embrace.

Cain resisted not the tender caresses of his spouse; but replied, Your joy, your excessive joy gives me offence. Yes I am displeased: Does not your transport say Cain is corrected! he was before, a man vicious and wicked—he hated his brother!—I was not wicked—When arose so strange an idea? Must I hate my brother, because I was not always weeping over him, or persecuting him with my embraces—I never hated my brother—No, never. I saw, indeed, with pain, that he, by his softness and effeminacy, stole from me the affection of Adam and Eve.—Could I be insensible of this? But Mahala, it is not without cause that sorrow hangs on my brow. What imprudence in our father to recount to us the history of his shameful fall, and all the disasters of which he and Eve are the cause! What need was there for us to know, and be so often told, that it was their fault that lost us the delights of Paradise, and rendered us unhappy? Were we ignorant of this, our miseries would be more supportable, and we should not deplore the want of enjoyments of which we could then have no idea.

Mahala stifled in her heart, remonstrances and complaints, and carefully read her husband's eyes, to see if she might venture to reply. Then mildly answered, suffer me, I conjure thee, my beloved, to weep, for I cannot restrain my tears. Suffer me to implore thee for thyself. I beseech thee to drive far from thee

thee this gloomy melancholy, that is again beginning to over-cloud thy soul. Thou canst, I know, my love, disperse it, and restore to thy heart peace and serenity. Let not thy troubled imagination always present to thy view subjects of misery and Grief, where thou oughtest to behold divine benignity and Grace. O Cain! why should we blame our parents for relating to us the wonders God has done for fallen man! They would excite in our souls a lively Gratitude and firm confidence. They are keenly sensible of every thing that can be a subject of Pain and Grief to us, and it is barbarity to reproach them with our misery. Rise, my love, I entreat thee, rise superior to the vexations that would again intrude themselves into thine heart, and obscure our days with gloomy sadness. She said no more, but gave her husband a tender Glance, while her eyes swam with tears.

The smile of affection now tempered the austerity of Cain's countenance, and he replied, as he embraced Mahala, I will, my dear, surmount the vexations that would gain an empire over me. I will not obscure thy days or mine with unavailing sorrow.

Anamelech, one of the inferior spirits of Hell, had observed the behaviour and discourse of Cain. He had seen, with malicious joy, the signs of envy and wrath in his ruffled features. This malignant dæmon, though one of the lowest order among the rebel angels, did not yield in pride and ambition to Satan, the arch-apostate. Often, while in Hell, he retired from his companions, whom he despised; often he

he remained in solitude among the infected rivers of sulphur, that flowed through the burning land, or strayed alone on the enormous rock, whose summits were hid in stormy clouds. There, in secret, he repined at his ignoble indolence, while the blue flames reflected from the tops of mountains, cast an obscure and horrid light on the path made by his wandering feet. But when Hell, with tumultuous roar, celebrated the praises and triumphs of her King, who on his return from the terrestrial Globe, elate with pride, recounted how he had seduced our general ancestors, and boasted his having forced the Eternal to pronounce against them the decree of death and wretchedness, then the black venom of Envy swelled the rancorous breast of Anamelech. Must Satan, he cried to himself, though accursed, enjoy in Hell triumphs and praise, while I unnoticed rove in obscurity, through these gloomy regions, or am confounded with the vile crowd, who with servile shouts, aggrandize him, and hail him victor? No, I feel myself equally of noble daring; I will astonish my compeers, I will force Hell's fierce monarch to pronounce my name with respect. Actuated by the prospect of rising to distinguished Greatness among the infernals, he meditated baleful projects, and nourished in solitude, inveterate hatred to the human race. His black mind formed various plans for their destruction, and his horrid designs succeeded but too well. The miseries of Adam's offspring rendered the name of this vile dæmon famous among the diabolical powers

powers of the fiery deep. He it was, who after a succession of ages, incited a cruel king to massacre the infants of Bethlehem. He saw with a malignant smile, men, barbarous as the outcasts of heaven, display a savage rage against those innocents. He received an horrid pleasure while he beheld their little limbs dashed against the stones, which their spouting veins stained with blood. He was delighted to see them stabbed and dismembered in the arms of their distracted mothers. He hovered with cruel satisfaction over that unfortunate city.—The cries of those tender victims were, to him, agreeable melody. He fed with eager joy, on the heart-rending complaints of their inconsolable mothers. The mangled limbs of infants, trampled under the feet of their savage murderers, was to him a pleasing sight; and he felt a hellish transport, when he beheld their fond parents prostrate on the earth, in all the bitterness of anguish, tearing their hair, and beating their breasts, disdained with the blood of their guiltless offspring.

This relentless fiend, revolving in his gloomy breast the actions of hell's fierce monarch, disdained ignoble sloth. I will ascend, said he, I will ascend to earth. I'll know the import of the sentence, Man shall die. I will accelerate his doom—I will kill. He then with hasty stride passed through the Gate of hell; he marked and trod the footsteps the arch-fiend had traced through ancient night, and the tumultuous empire of chaos. A brigantine thus equipped for theft, steers with full sail

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through the immense sea, and stopping on the coast of Hesperia, surprizes the tranquil inhabitants of some peaceful village, while fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and inconsolable wives, lament on the shore, pursuing, with their weeping eyes, the ravishers, who with out-spread sails, soon escape from sight.

The detestable Anamelech long flew with rapidity through the gloomy empire of night, till at length he perceived a faint light on the frontiers of the new-created universe. As a malefactor meditating some horrid murder in the shade and silence of the night, proceeds to execute his purpose, through the Gloom, towards the city, and finds it on all sides illuminated, is struck with fear, and would gladly hide himself from every eye; thus the impure spirit was agitated with terror, while he traversed the immense sphere which surrounded the earth. On his arrival on this Globe, his piercing eye soon discovered the abode of man, and he alighted in the shady Grove.—Here then, said he, dwells man, heaven's new favourite. This earth is cursed, and far unlike the smiling Garden where he first was placed. Delightful spot! now guarded by the flaming sword; for I beheld it while I hovered over the earth; this they have lost; but what is left them is not hell. Perhaps by plaintive supplications they have softened the anger of their God. For did not hell still follow me from place to place: did I not bear within myself an hell, I might, for aught I see, be happy here: but possibly their grosser bodies may be subject to pains, to Grievs unknown

known to ethereal substances. Ah! I see some of the heavenly host placed as Guardians over man, though under malediction. I must elude their care, escape their attention, or all my designs will be rendered abortive, and I shall become the sport, rather than the admiration of Satan, and the sycophants who surround his throne. Yonder is the family of sinners, but I see no signs of misery: their evils, perhaps, commence not till death. I'll know. If their hearts are open to seduction, I will, by my wiles, engage them in new crimes that may accelerate their punishment. Satan succeeded, by an easy artifice, with the chiefs of this family, while they were yet perfect. Now they are degraded by sin, and the curse of their God, can it be harder to subvert them? No, I shall induce them to commit actions so black, that their heavenly Guardians shall quit the earth with horror, and he who created them shall, by his thunder, exterminate the ungrateful race, or precipitate them into the burning lake; then, on our scorching banks, we shall taste of joy; shall triumph, while we behold these worthy inhabitants of this new world rolling in flames of sulphur, cursing their existence, and their Almighty Maker. Ah—I see one of them bears on his brow the marks of sullen discontent. He has a ferocity in his looks that gives me hope. My first effort shall be on him. His companion weeps—I will learn the cause of her tears.

The malevolent spirit, invisible to human sight, followed Cain and his spouse, meditating seduction and murder. When they were

retired to their dwelling, the impure dæmon repeated after them, in malicious mockery, Rise superior to the vexations that intrude themselves into thine heart! Drive far from thee these clouds of melancholy that would obscure thy days! Then quitting irony, to give utterance to the infernal malice, by which he was agitated, No, said he, what is good shall never take root in thine ungrateful heart; I will destroy it. Those clouds of melancholy thou would'st disperse, shall be re-assembled over thy head, thick and black as those which surround with eternal darkness, the summits of the infernal mountains. My task will be no hard one. Thou thyself labourest to assemble them. I have only to assist thee; it will be to me a pleasing task to second thine own efforts. Yes I will accumulate them on thy brow: desolation and misery, yet unknown to the human race, shall find entrance among mortals: thy days shall be filled with horror and darkness, and those darlings of heaven shall taste the cup of wrath, poured for angels.

Chearful dawn again began to gild the horizon, inspiring songs and Gaiety, when Cain, with his instruments of husbandry, was going to the field. Abel had already given him the salute of the morning, and was conducting his flocks to pastures, still moist with the dew of the night. Mahala and Thirza were advancing hand in hand towards the Garden which surrounded the altar. They stopped to salute their brothers, when Eve came to them from her cabin, with Gestures of desperation.—Both
were

were seized with inquietude and concern, and approaching her, cried out, with emotion, O my mother! You weep—Why weep you? Eve at this question, redoubled her tears, then endeavouring to stifle her Grief, she, giving them a look of affection, said, while her words were interrupted by sighs, Alas! my children, have you not heard dreadful Groans come from our dwelling. The sharpest pains this night have seized your father, and he now struggles with some disease that seems to penetrate even to his bones. He endeavours to conceal his anguish. He would prevent the sighs that escape from my heart. He suppresses his complaints, and strives to console me. But O my children! the most poignant Grief has taken possession of my soul, and my tortured heart refuses all consolation. When he reposes in most tranquility, he seems lost in reflection: an instant after he groans with agony—a cold sweat covers his face, and the tears he had restrained burst in a torrent from his eyes. O my dear children, dreadful apprehensions oppress my heart. Support me, my daughters; support your unhappy mother, sinking under the weight of affliction. Let us go to your father. Eve followed by her lamenting children, returned to her spouse, weeping and leaning on the shoulder of Mahala.

Filled with sorrow, they surrounded the bed of the sick. Adam then lay tranquil. His countenance and Gestures discovered, that in spite of suffering and pain, his soul was master of itself. He cast on his afflicted children a look

look of parental tendernefs. He even gave them a fmile of affection, and faid, the hand of the Almighty, my beloved offspring, is on me. My entrails are torn with anguifh: but praifed be the Lord, who regulates all by his unerring wifdom! perhaps he has ordained thefe pains to unloofe the bands that unite my foul to this frail body. If it is now to return to the duft of which it is formed, I fubmit. I adore the difpenfations of my Maker, and wait with refignation and love, the fatal hour. I will praife thee, Sovereign of Life and Death, till this union is diffolved: my foul fhall then, deliver'd from its vefture of earth, offer thee more elevated praife, O God of Confolation! deign to be my fupport. Teach me to endure with patience, my prefent pain, in firm hope of future happinefs. But above all forfake me not, O my Maker! forfake not an expiring finner in the diftreffful hour of death. Abandon me not, when my foul is difmayed by the laft tremblings of nature!

He then caft his languid eyes on our general mother, who was weeping at his fide. And thou Eve, faid he, whom I love as myfelf, and you my dear children, add not to my Griefs by your forrow and tears. How cruelly does your affliction diftrefs me! Ceafe, my beloved—ceafe thefe fighs and lamentations. Perhaps the Lord may remove thefe terrors of his hand, and death may yet be at a diftance. Perhaps I may again, even on this earth, tafte joy and Gladnefs. I wait the good pleafure of my God, and refign myfelf to his will. Do you alfo, my dear children,
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and you, my tender spouse, acquiesce, with submission and devout Gratitude, in the divine appointments. Accustom yourselves before-hand to reflect with holy resignation, on the instant when it shall please the Almighty to strip off this Garment of earth, and take me from you. The father of mankind ceased to speak. Sharp pangs again seized him, and he could only utter sighs and Groans.

When his agonies were abated, he regarded all about him with silent attention; but his looks were more particularly fixed on Eve, who seemed over-whelmed by her deep distress: her sorrows augmented by those of her husband, and, to console her, he again resumed his discourse: Alas! said he, the death of the first sinner, will doubtless have something frightful in it to those who shall behold it: but it will be more terrible to him who shall be the victim. May that merciful God, who has never abandoned us in our distress, succour me in that dreadful hour!—He will do it—His past mercies are pledges that he will. As for you, my children, added he, go—leave me—resign me to the will of the Lord. Pray for me with fervor.

This dreadful crisis may perhaps end in a sweet sleep, that may restore vigour to my enfeebled members.

Adam was silent. His children stooped to kiss his trembling hand. Yes my father, cried they, we will prostrate ourselves before the Lord. We will supplicate, that sweet repose may repair thy strength exhausted by suffering. O may our prayer be accepted! may the
Lord

Lord remove from thee these pains by which thou art now tormented.

With hearts pierced with Grief, they left the cottage. Eve only remained. I would sleep said Adam, addressing himself to his wife, who sat near his bed, suffused in tears. Why my beloved dost thou give way to thy grief? thy tenderness, by increasing my pain, may chase repose far from me. At length he wiped his face in the skins that covered him, to conceal from his companion the distress and inquietude of his mind. Is this said he to himself,—is this that hour so full of sorrow? I fear it is. Great God, how terrible! Abandon me not in the last agony, an expiring sinner. How sweet would be my consolations, even in death, if these sufferings, these fears, would exempt my unhappy offspring from the consequences of the curse pronounced on them for my sin! But no, the same horrors will terrify, the same veil of darkness will extend over all born of woman. From a trunk empoisoned by sin, what can be produced but sinners? sinners subject to death;—I have killed all my posterity. Ah! like me, must be torn from those they love, from those whose tenderness softened and endeared life, and gave it all its delights. O Eve, O spouse, tender and dear! what anguish will rend thy heart! What tears wilt thou shed over my senseless dust! Frightful prospect! Will not my inanimate clay tremble, when the orphan, left with support, shall lament the loss of its father, snatched away by death in the midst of his course? or when decrepid parents shall be deprived of
their

their sons, who were the comfort and support of their declining age : when sisters shall water with their tears the dead bodies of their brothers ; the wife that of her husband ; the lover that of the object beloved. Spare then my memory, O my children ! Curse not my peaceful dust. It is just that the weight of the curse should fall on the last hour, the hour that tears us from this life of sin. Death, when he divides the soul from its covering of clay, will also draw it from a state of malediction. If notwithstanding the little power its degradation has left it, it has struggled against vice, and endeavoured to raise itself to virtue, it shall enjoy never-ending happiness in the regions of immortality. Ye ought then, O my offspring, to execrate my ashes. Our abode on earth is not properly life ; 'tis but the dawn of life ; a troublesome dream. Oppress me not then ye mountains of Grief ; 'tis by dying I shall revive, I wait for that instant, firmly relying on the mercies of my God. Such were the thoughts of Adam, when a profound sleep overpowered his senses.

Eve sat drowned in sorrow, by the bed of her sleeping husband, and, in a low voice, fearing to disturb his repose, vented the anguish of her heart. What evils do I experience ? said she. O curse, the consequence of sin ! let thy burden rest on me ; I was the first sinner. Let a double weight of woe fall on my wretched head. It is just, I was the first offender. Ah ! it is already on me ; all the Grievs, all the distresses of my husband, of my unhappy offspring flow from me. Their
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pains, their sorrows, are so many gnawing worms that prey on me. O my spouse! if thou diest—How I tremble at the idea! a general shivering seizes me; the cold sweat trickles down my face. Can the horrors of death be more dreadful? If thou art going to die for my fault, O Adam! If these agonies are to unloose the bands of life! hate me not. Add not, to my insupportable miseries, thine anger. And ye my children, curse not your unhappy mother. Guilty as I am I deserve your pity. Ye upbraid me not, 'tis true, but alas! every sigh, every tear awakens my keen remorse, and it is to me a cutting reproach. O God Almighty! lend an ear to my plaintive supplications, and remove his sufferings: or, if they are fore-runners of death; if his body must now return to the dust,—terrifying thought!—separate us not: let me die with him. Suffer my soul to retire first, that I may not behold his last pangs. I was the first sinner. Eve ceased to speak, and remained inconsolable, weeping by the side of her husband.

Cain, in spite of the roughness of his temper, shed tears at the Groans and discourse of his father. He went into the fields when he left the cottage, and thus expressed his concern. I could not help weeping when I was near the bed of my father: yet I hope that he will not die. God grant that this good parent, whom I love, may not die. Yes, I could not help weeping: but yet I am not drowned in sorrow like my brother. Before I shed tears on all occasions, I must lose my natural

natural firmness, and become like him, soft and effeminate. Will they still say that I am of a savage disposition? at least they will imagine that Abel loves Adam better than I, because I cannot weep like him. I love my father: he is as dear to me as my brother: but I cannot command my tears to flow.

Abel, penetrated with sorrow, went into his pastures. He prostrated himself on the earth; he bent his head on the Grass, which he moistened with his tears, and addressed this prayer to the Almighty. With the most profound humility I would praise Thee, O my God! Thou conductest the affairs of mortals with unerring wisdom, and infinite Goodness. Though depressed by Grief, I dare presume to offer up to Thee my supplications; for thou hast permitted the sinner to implore thy mercy. Thine unmerited Goodness has allowed us this sweet consolation, in this the midst of the evils which surround us. I ought not, I do not hope, that thou wilt change the purposes of thy wisdom, in compliance with the desires of a plaintive worm. Thy ways, O Gracious God, are wise and Good. To thee will I resign myself, supplicating only for strength to suffer, and for consolation in our pain. Thou knowest, O Omnicient God! Thou knowest the desires, the ardent wishes of my soul. If these desires, if these wishes are not contrary to the designs of thine infinite wisdom, restore to our afflicted mother, the husband for whom she supplicates thee: restore her him in whom her life is bound up, and whose loss would render her wretched—restore to us his sorrow-

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ing children, a father tenderly beloved. Defer, O God merciful and Gracious! defer, if it be thy will, his death to a more distant period. Speak, O God! and it is done; command, and it is accomplished. At thy nod our evils will disappear, and joy and Gladness, thanksgivings and praise, will resound from the humble habitation of sinners. Permit him who gave us life, to remain yet longer with us. Spare him, that he may still declare to us thine infinite bounties, and teach our infant children to lisp forth thy praise. But if thine unerring wisdom has appointed this the time for his dissolution; be not offended, O my Maker! with this excess of our Grief. Pardon the disorder of my words. If he must now die, lend him, O God of compassion! lend him thine assistance in the terrible hour of death, and mercifully forgive our cries and Groans. Moderate by thy divine consolations, our afflictions, that we may not offend thee by our despair.

Such was the prayer of Abel. He was still prostrate on the earth, from which he was roused by a distant sound. Sweet odours were wafted around, and before him stood a guardian angel, resplendent in beauty. On his serene brow he wore a coronet of roses, and his smile was gracious as the opening day. He said, with a voice mild as the breath of the Zephyrs, the Lord hath lent a gracious ear, O Abel! to the voice of thy supplications. He hath granted thee the desires of thine heart. He hath commanded me to assume a body, and to bring thee consolation and succour. The
Eternal,

Eternal, who incessantly watches over his creatures, who regards with an eye of beneficence the crawling insect, as well as the archangel arrayed in Glory, hath ordered this earth to produce, in its bosom, salutary remedies for the diseases of its inhabitants, whose bodies, by the fall, are exposed to pain and sickness, which shall by degrees lead them to death and to corruption, the sad consequences of having disobeyed their Maker. Friend, take these plants and these flowers; they are specifics to restore health to thy father; boil them in the clear water of the fountain: let him drink and be whole.

The angel having given him the salutary herbs, disappeared. Struck with inexpressible astonishment, he remained some time immovable; then breathed the devout Gratitude of his soul, in this short ejaculation: What am I, O God! What am I, that thou shouldest thus graciously regard my prayer? I am but sinful dust and ashes. I would praise thee, O my God! but thy bounties exceed all praise. The triumphant archangel cannot sufficiently exalt thy name, yet thou hast deigned to accept the supplications of a worm.

His lively joy lent him wings. He ran to his cottage, and with eager impatience, prepared the odoriferous dilution. This performed he flew to his father. Eve was still bathed in tears, and her daughters sat pensive by her side. They saw with surprize his eagerness, the joy which sparkled in his eyes, and the smile which sat on his lips. Dry up your tears, my beloved, said he, as he entered. Weep no more,

more, O my mother! the Lord hath heard our prayers, and hath sent us succour. An angel hath appeared to me in the pastures. He hath given me aromatic herbs and flowers, gathered by his celestial hand. Boil these, said he, in clear water, and restore health to thy father. They heard his words with astonishment, and rendered thanks to the Lord, with Gratitude and humble confidence. The sick drank the healing draught, and soon experienced its salutary effects. Adam now raised himself on his bed, and with ardent piety offer'd up his adorations; then taking the hand of Abel, he pressed it to his cheek, and wetted it with tears of joy, saying, O my son! blessed be thou! thou by whom God hath sent me succour: thou whose prayer he accepts, and hath vouchsafed to answer. I again bless thee my son! my beloved son! Eve and her daughters then embraced him by whom the Lord had sent them succour.

Cain, at this instant entered the dwelling of his father. While in the field, he had been tormented with care and anxiety: I will return, said he to himself; I will return to my father: perhaps he needs my assistance.—Perhaps he is already dead, and I have not received a last blessing from his lips. I will hasten to him.—I love my father.

On his entering, he saw, with amazement, their joy. He heard Adam bless his brother. Mahala, his wife, ran to him, and embracing him, said, The Lord, my beloved, hath sent us succour by the hand of Abel. Cain approached the bed of Adam, and kissing

ling his hand, said I salute thee, O my father! Praised be God that restores thee to our tears; but O my father, have you no blessing for me? you have blessed my brother, by whom the Lord sent you help: bless me also your first-born. Adam gave him a look of affection, and pressing his hand between both his, said I give thee my blessing, O Cain, be blessed of God, my first-born! May the favour of the Lord rest on thee: may thine heart enjoy tranquility and peace, and thy soul uninterrupted repose! Cain then embraced his brother, how could he avoid it? all had embraced him.

Cain left his father's dwelling: but it was to retire into the gloomy recesses of a thick Grove, where, oppressed with melancholy, he repeated after Adam Peace and tranquility, an uninterrupted repose—How can I enjoy this tranquility? Where shall I find this repose? Was not I forced to petition for a blessing, while his affection made him, unasked, pour forth his soul in blessings on my happy brother? he has allowed me my rank of first-born. What advantage to me is this superiority? misery is my inheritance, disdain my portion. It is by the hand of Abel the Lord hath restored health to my father. I am rejected; the bright messengers of heaven appear not to me; they pass me with contempt; they honour me not with their regards. While I spend my strength in the labours of the field: while the sweat drops from my face, embrowned by the scorching sun, the angels hold converse with him, whose delicate hands are unsoiled by labour; who lies idle near his flock,

flock, or with unmanly softness is shedding tears, because the shining dew glitters on the Grass and herbage, or the setting sun tinges the clouds with purple. Happy favourite! All nature smiles on thee. I only feel the curse! I only eat my bread by the sweat of my brow. The whole weight of the divine malediction falls on my wretched head. I am in every thing unhappy. Thus revolving in his unhappy brain gloomy ideas, the offspring of hatred and envy, he wandered in the thick shade.

The sun was retiring behind the azure mountains, and reflected on the clouds a glowing red, when Adam said to his wife, I will my beloved, before the day is closed, render thanks to God, who hath restored my health. He left his bed full of strength and vigour, and repaired, accompanied by his daughters, to the entrance of his cottage. The departing sun diffused a mild light over the fields: Adam cast himself on his knees, and viewed with transport, the country thus enlightened. Here am I said he, with fervent effusion of heart—here am I my Sovereign Master, prostrate before thy face, penetrated with a lively sense of thine infinite Goodness. Ye agonizing pangs! what are become of you? ye pierced my bones, ye scorched my vitals; yet in the midst of anguish, my soul lost not her hope; she placed her confidence in God and was not disappointed.—The Almighty lent a gracious ear to the Groans and cries of a sinner. He regarded the voice of a worm; health returned—pain and sorrow are no more. Death shall

shall not triumph over my dust; I shall still praise my Maker in this habitation of clay, this house of corruption. I will praise thee, O my God! I will praise thee from the early dawn to the rising of the evening star. While my soul is confined in this body of earth, it shall flammer forth its Gratitude: but it will praise thee in more exalted strains when disengaged from this obstructing dust, it shall rise triumphant and refined; it shall then behold thee face to face, arrayed in all the lustre of thy magnificence. O ye angels, resplendent in light, cast your eyes on this dwelling of sinners, this abode of death. The earth shook from its foundation when it was defiled by sin, and the Almighty Maker turned from it his regards. Yet on this earth, he now displays the wonders of his love: attune your Golden Harps to his praise; exalt his name in seraphic strains, while man can only lip in rapture. I salute thee, O sun! I salute thy retiring beams. When thy morning rays enlightened these fields, I groaned oppressed by pain: when they illumined my dwelling, I saluted them with sighs: ere they had given place to the grey twilight, I am returning thanks to the Lord of Life, who hath removed my Griefs. I salute you, ye lofty mountains, and ye hills scattered over the plain; mine eyes shall still behold, reflected from your summits, the glowing brightness of the rising and the setting sun. I salute ye, O ye birds, who chant the praises of the Eternal! your songs still recreate mine ear. Ye limped streams, I shall again repose my weary

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limbs on your flowery banks ; again be lulled to rest by your soft murmurs : and ye Groves, ye bowers, ye woods, I shall still walk under your refreshing shades ; ye shall again shield me from the sun's too ardent ray, when rapt in profound meditation, I shall wander in your fragrant retreats. I salute thee, O nature entire ; but I worship and adore only nature's God, who supported my vile clay, when ready to crumble into dust.

The father of men thus praised the Lord, while the whole creation appeared attentive to his prayer ; and seemed to felicitate his return to life. The glorious orb of day darted on its last rays. The young Zephyrs wafted on their ambrosial wings the aromatic perfumes of the Groves and Gardens, as if charged by the flowers to exhale their sweets to him. The feathered inhabitants of the woods, saluted him with their softest notes, as actuated by a lively joy.

Cain and Abel came under the shade, while Adam was yet on his knees. They saw, with delight, their father restored to health. The prayer ended. Adam arose from the earth, he embraced, and he received the embraces of his transported children : he kissed with fond affection the moistened cheek of our general mother ; after which he, Eve and their daughters, returned to their dwelling. Abel then addressing himself to Cain, said, Let us also, my brother, render thanks to God Most High, who has restored to our tears our affectionate father. I will, by the light of the moon, which is now rising, offer on mine altar,

tar, a young lamb: Wilt thou not also, on thine altar, make an offering?

Cain, giving him a gloomy and angry look, said, Yes, I will present an offering to the Lord of what my barren fields afford. Abel, with graceful sweetness, replied, O my brother! the Lord our God counts as nothing the lamb that burns before him, neither doth he regard the fruits of the field which the fire consumes. 'Tis the ardent piety that flames in the heart of the worshipper, that gives the offering all its value.

Cain returned. The fire of heaven will perhaps consume thy victim; for by thee the Lord sent health to our father—I am disdained. However I will make my offering. I am as well as thee, penetrated with Gratitude. Our father, who is restored to our wishes, is equally dear to me as to thee. Let the Lord do with me, miserable worm! according to his good pleasure.

Abel tenderly threw himself on the neck of Cain, saying, Ah my brother, my dear brother! dost thou make the Lord's having sent by my hand, relief to our father, a new subject of discontent? I was charged with this commission for us all. All prayed to the Lord! the prayers of all were answered. Banish from thy bosom, my dear brother!—let me intreat thee, to banish for ever these gloomy ideas. The Lord who sees into the inmost recesses of our souls, can discover there unjust thoughts, and secret murmurs. Love me as I love thee; offer thine offering? but suffer it not to be defiled by any impure disposition.

May the Lord, O my brother! favourably accept thy praises, and graciously shed his blessings on thee.

Cain answered not, but walked towards his field, and Abel looking after him with a pitying eye, repaired to his pastures. Each advanced to the altar; Abel slew a young lamb, laid it on his altar, scattered on it odoriferous herbs and flowers, and put fire to the offering, then warmed with fervent piety, prostrated himself before it, and with humble Gratitude, praised the Lord. The flame arose on high through the Gloom of night, and enlightened the fields and pastures. The Lord forbade the winds to blow, because the sacrifice was acceptable.

Cain laid on his altar the fruits of the field; put fire to the offering, and also prostrated himself before it. Instantly a terrific sound was heard among the bushes. A furious whirlwind advanced to the altar; dispersed the offering of Cain, and covered him with flame and smoke. He retired trembling, when a majestic voice, proceeded from the darkness, uttered these awful words, Why is pale fear seen in thy visage? There is yet time: correct thyself: repent, and I will pardon thy sin: if thou dost not, thy crime and its chastisement shall pursue thee for ever. Why hatest thou thy brother? He loves thee, he honours thee with true affection.

Cain, seized with horror, quitted the place of sacrifice, a tempestuous wind driving after him the infected smoke of the offering. Appalled with terror, he wandered through the darkness.

darkness. His heart trembled within him; and a cold sweat ran down his face. Casting his eyes around, he beheld the bright flame of his brother's sacrifice rising in the air in spiry waves. At this view he turned away his head, and gnashing his teeth, cried, there's the sacrifice of the favourite. Fly mine eyes this hateful sight. Another look would fill my heart with all the rage of the infernals. I cannot help cursing him with my trembling lips.—But turn, unhappy wretch, turn thy fury on thyself. Come O death! O destruction come, and put a period to my misery and my life! Why, O my mother, didst thou entail misery on thy wretched offspring? Shall I present myself before you, in the horrors of my despair? Shall my agonies, my terrors, my insupportable wretchedness, shew you the distresses your fatal relapse prepared for your descendants? Ah! no. Revenge not unhappy man—revenge not thyself on a father, by bringing before his eyes, a spectacle of such horror. Seized with terror, he would expire in my sight, and I should, if possible, be still more wretched. The wrath of the Lord lies heavy on me. He has cursed me. He disdain my offering. I am the most desolate creature on the face of the earth. The animals of the field, the reptiles of the Ground, compared with me, are worthy of envy. O merciful God! if it be possible, extend thine indulgence to me. Turn from me, O God! thy fierce anger or again reduce me to nothing.—But what do I say?—O hard obdurate heart!—Correct thyself, he hath said, and I will pardon thy past offences.

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Chuse pardon or misery!—misery eternal! misery inexpressible! Yes I have sinned: my iniquities rise above my head: they cry for vengeance. Thou art just, O God! Thy vengeance is also just. The farther we stray from the paths of perfection and wisdom, the farther we stray from happiness. I must then be guilty, since I am unhappy. I will forsake these ways of perverseness. Turn thine eyes, O God, from my past offences: Preserve me from committing new ones. Take pity on me, O my God! or—reduce me to nothing,

THE

DEATH OF ABEL.

BOOK IV.

THE air was yet moist with the dew of night; the birds still slept in silence; the sun had not begun to gild the tops of the hills, or the hovering fogs of the morning; yet Cain, distressed and melancholy, had left his cottage. Mahala, unknowing she was overheard, had wept and prayed for him during the tedious night. The black traces of despair were too visible in his countenance to escape the observation of his affectionate wife. She

She raised to heaven her supplicating hands. She begged for him, mercy and forgiveness, she intreated that the divine consolation and Grace might soften the heart of her wretched husband. Her lively Grief, her intense devotion, as she feared disturbing the partner of her bed, were only uttered in sighs and tears. Yet the inarticulate expressions of her sorrow had reached the ears of Cain, who, unable to bear her Grief, wandered in the early dawn. His murmuring voice resounded through the profound calm of the fields like distant thunder. Night odious! night horrible! said he. What black clouds surround me! What fears! What terrors! When my imagination began to be calmed, when gentle sleep had hushed my Grievings, the voice of lamentation awoke me. Alas! I only wake to be replunged in wretchedness. Shall I never more enjoy repose? Why did she pray and weep for me? She yet knows not that my offering was rejected.—Her tears increase my distress.—I cannot bear her Groans—they add to my Grievings—they chase peace from my heart. This day, like the last, must be passed in sorrow and bitterness. While a smile of approbation rewards every action of my brother, while he enjoys every soothing delight, terror and sadness pursue me. I love thee, Mahala—I love thee tenderly. Thou art dearer to me than myself. Why then shouldst thou, by thy lamentations, fill with anguish the few hours of rest my miseries have left me?

He stooped under a bush that grew on the side of a rock; O soft sleep, said he, restore me here

here thy sweet balmy blessings. Unhappy that I am, weakened by fatigue and terror, I invoked thee in my cottage. Scarce hadst thou spread over me thy downy pinions, when the voice of sorrow chased thee from mine eyes. Here is none to trouble my repose except beings inanimate; influenced by the wrath of Heaven, can drive quite from me, even in this distant retreat. O Earth, which by a curse too severe, requires such painful labour—Alas! I only labour to prolong a life of wretchedness:—now at least let me, on thy bosom, find some moments of rest, to repair my exhausted strength. I expect no other happiness. I know no greater. He was silent. He laid himself on the fragrant Grass, and the power he had invoked wrapt him in his sable wing.

Anamelech secretly followed the steps of Cain. He was now at his side. A profound sleep, said the malicious spirit, has closed his eyes. I will continue near him, to accomplish my purpose and accelerate his destruction. Come assist me ye hovering dreams, disturb his soul with fantastic visions: assemble each image that can inspire him with fury and distraction. Come envy with corrosive tooth, hot rage and every tumultuous passion, thus spoke the spirit impure, and with intent malign, laid him near Cain. A furious wind arose; it howled in the caverns of the rocks; it shook with dreadful roar the bushes, and aid rudely agitated the hair of Cain: But in vain it howled in the caverns of the rocks: in vain it shook with dreadful roar the bushes: in

in vain it rudely agitated the hair of Cain :
Sleep sat heavy on his wearied eye-lids, and
he still kept them closed.

He beheld in a dream a vast field, on which were scattered a number of mean cottages. He saw his sons and his grandsons dispersed over the plain, where they resolutely exposed themselves to the mid-day sun, which darted his scorching rays on their heads. Assiduous at their painful labours, sometimes they gathered fruit for their subsistence, at others prepared the earth to receive fresh seeds ; or stooping, wounded their hands with pulling up the thorny brambles, lest they should choak the rising grain, and lessen the utility of their former industry. He saw also their wives busied in domestic labour. He beheld them preparing a frugal refreshment against the return of their husbands. Eliel, his eldest son, then appeared before him ; he saw him lift with difficulty a heavy burthen from the earth ; he bore it on his shoulder tottering with the load ; the sweat streamed from his embrowned face, and sorrow and discontent appeared in his eyes. What a life of misery ! said Eliel. How well is the prediction fulfilled, which said, Man shall eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. Did the Creator banish from his presence all the offspring of Adam ? Or did the curse affect only the children of the first-born ? Too severely it is felt by us sons of Cain ; our portion is labour and indigence. While in yonder fields, inhabited by Abel's children, from which our unnatural kinsmen have banished us to these barren

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deserts, is concentered all that can give delight to man. The earth spontaneously pours forth her bounties. Those sons of luxury recline in fragrant bowers. Nature herself seems subservient to their ease and sloth. Every comfort, every pleasure, if pleasure is to be found on earth, is the portion of these voluptuous idlers. Thus murmuring, Eliel slowly staggered towards the cottages.

Cain was now carried, on imagination's sportive wing, to a plain enamelled with a variety of flowers, watered by limpid brooks, which, meandering, ran with soft murmers near aromatic bowers, under the shade of tufted groves. The banks were decorated with lofty trees, and the clear water reflected the vivid colour of their several fruits, formed a new landscape. The streams after thus roving through the flowery turf, finished their wandering course in an ample lake, whose glassy surface was smooth and unruffled. He saw at a distance a citron grove, where played the wanton zephyrs, fanning with their ambrosial wings, the sweets around. The prospect was terminated by a range of lofty fig-trees, which spread their extensive shade over the tender flowers. In this delightful spot were accumulated all the beauties with which imaginative fable had decorated the charming vale of Tempe, or Cnidus' luxuriant land; where arose, consecrated to Venus, a magnificent temple on lucid columns.

Cain saw in his dream flocks white as the falling snow sporting in the plenteous herbage, while the indolent shepherd, whose head was encircled

encircled with wreaths of flowers, lay reclined under the spreading palm, chanting to the sympathizing object of his passion an amorous lay. Their boys blooming as the loves, and girls sweet as the Graces, assembled under the arches of interwoven honey-suckles and myrtles, where with agile feet they formed the festive dance. The bright juice of the grape sparkled in golden goblets, and delicious fruits were spread on tables covered with flowers; while the ambient air resounded with vocal and instrumental harmony. Cain with regret beheld these children of dissipation. He saw a young man rise in the midst of the sportive assembly, and heard him thus address his brethren: I rejoice with you my jocund friends: I rejoice in our present felicity.—Nature smiles on us: she has united in this delightful spot, all that can charm the ear, or ravish the heart: but to conserve her bounties, we must again return to labour: and labour is troublesome and fatiguing. Shall our hands, formed to touch the soft lute and sounding lyre, be rendered callous by the drudgery of the field? Shall our heads, so well becoming these encircling roses, be again exposed to the sun's fierce rays? No, we will recline on beds of violets under the myrtle, while the hardy sons of earth, the brawny inhabitants of yonder plains, shall for us endure the toil of labour. The men shall till our grounds, their wives and daughters shall be servants of ours. What say ye my gay companions, is the prospect pleasing? You smile approbation. Lend me your assistance, my dear brethren, and ere to-morrow's

morrow's dawn, we will make it a joyful reality. When the sun has withdrawn his rays from the earth, and night has spread over it her mantle darkness, we will march in silence to the cottages of those rustics. We shall doubtless find them, after the rugged toil of the day, buried in the arms of sleep, and shall easily take them captive. 'Tis true our number is superior to theirs, and you may wonder why I recommend silence, and chuse night for our expedition; but my friends, the men are strong: hardship and fatigue have braced their nerves, and despair may render them desperate. Let us then avoid a battle, in which, if victors, we must suffer some loss, and chuse the least dangerous mode of effecting our purpose. The young man was silent. The whole assembly were unanimous in the praises, and shewed their readiness to join in the infernal scheme by loud shouts of applause.

A new scene now struck the eyes of Cain.— It was night, and the inhuman artifice was put in execution. He heard cries of desolation and terror, intermingled with shouts of insult and triumph. He beheld the fields and rocks illumined by the flames of the burning cottages; by this dreadful light, he saw his sons and grandsons bound, and with them their wives and infants, tamely marching before the children of Abel, like a flock of bleating sheep.

Such was the dream of Cain. He was distressed though asleep. When Abel having perceived him under the bushes at the foot of the rock, approached, with looks of affection,

affection, and in a voice of tenderness, said, Ah my brother, soon mayest thou awake! I long to embrace thee, and express the sweet sensation by which my heart is engrossed.— I love thee my brother; I see with pain thy uneasiness, and gladly would remove from thy soul the fatal jealousy that embitters thy days. Awake O Cain, awake, that my heart may again enjoy the pleasures of reconciliation. But soft, ye impatient wishes—breathe gently ye winds: ye birds cease your untimely melody, lest you disturb the precious repose of my brother. Perhaps his fatigued limbs require yet longer the restorative of sleep—But how he lies! how pale—how wan!—His features seem distorted by fury! Why do you distress him ye visions of terror? Leave his soul to enjoy tranquility, ye imaginary horrors; take possession of it ye pleasing images. Present to his mind the sweet occupations of domestic life; the tender delights of the husband and the father. May every thing most lovely in the creation, fill his imagination, and soothe his soul! may he awake calm and smiling as the vernal morn! May joy expand his countenance, and his delighted heart utter his gratitude to the Great Giver of every good, in devote praise! He spoke no more, but stood steadfastly looking at Cain, while astonishment, inquietude, and tender love, were visible in his eyes.

As the fierce lion couching at the foot of a rock, (who though asleep, freezes with terror the trembling traveller, and obliges him to take a wide circuit to avoid the dreadful beast)

beast) if the murderous arrow, in its rapid flight, pierces his side, suddenly he starts, and with dreadful roar, seeks his enemy; he foams, he rages; his blazing eyes menace destruction. The first object he meets is the victim of his fury; perhaps an innocent child playing on the grass with variegated flowers. Not less terrible rose Cain; his eyes were inflamed, and rancour sat on his pallid cheek! A storm of wrath was gathering: the cloud burst. He stamped his foot on the ground.—Open, O earth! he cried, open, O earth, and hide me, hide me from my miseries in thy lowest abyss. My life is one continued round of distress and torture, and, as if this was not enough, I see—insupportable prospect! I see that my children shall one day inherit my miseries. But I implore in vain, thou wilt not open; the Almighty Avenger restrains thee. I must, such is his will, I must be wretched. And that future evils may disturb my scanty enjoyment of present good, he himself draws aside the veil. Cursed be the hour when my mother, by my birth, gave the first proof of her sad fertility; cursed be the place where she first felt the pangs of child birth! may all its products perish. May he that shall sow it lose his grain and his labour! May sudden terror strike even to the bones, all who shall pass over it.

These were the imprecations of Cain. When Abel, pale as the sculptured marble, ventured to approach him with slow and unsteady step. My brother? said he, in a trembling voice: No—O my God!—Horror freezes my blood—

blood—One of the seditious spirits, whom the Eternal precipitated from Heaven, has surely taken his form, under which he utters his blasphemies! Where art thou my brother? I fly to seek thee—to bless thee.—Where art thou my brother?

Here I am, cried Cain, in a voice of thunder: Here am I, thou soft favourite—thou dear minion of the vengeful Eternal, and of all nature,—thou whose viperous race are one day solely to engross all the felicity of this world. Yes so it must be. It is fit there should be a tribe of slaves, as beasts of burthen to the favourite lineage. Their delicate limbs must not endure the hardships of labour. Formed only for voluptuous idleness, these sons of sloth must recline in the shady bowers while—The rage of Hell is in my heart—Cannot I—

Cain! my brother! said Abel, interrupting him, with a voice and look that at once expressed his horror, affection and astonishment: What terrifying dream has troubled thy soul? I sought thee in the early dawn, I came to embrace thee at the springing day. But how do I find thee agitated? How dost thou return my tender love? When, O when, my dearest brother, shall peace, shall amity bless our dwellings? When will come the happy day—a day, after which our parents so ardently long, when fraternal affection and social joy, shall be firmly established? O Cain! Cain: canst thou so soon forget the pleasures of reconciliation, of which thou seemed so sensible, when in a rapture of joy and friendship I flew
—bold into

into thine arms! Have I offended thee my brother?—Unknowingly have I offended thee then: But why then dost thou cast on me such furious looks! By all that is sacred I conjure thee to forget my involuntary fault, and receive my embraces. As Abel pronounced the last words, he stooped to clasp the knees of his brother; but Cain starting back, crying, Ah, thou serpent! Wouldest thou entwine thyself about me? At the same instant with an arm strengthened by rage, he swung a massy club and smote the head of his brother. The innocent victim of his fury fell at his feet. The bones of his head were crushed. He once raised his dying eyes to his unnatural brother, and, giving him a look of pardon and pity, expired. His blood distained the waving curls of his fair hair, and ran in a stream to the foot of his murderer.

Cain stood motionless, stiffened with horror. The cold sweat ran from his trembling members while he beheld with agony, the last convulsions of his expiring brother. The smoke of the blood he had shed, ascended even to him. Cursed blow! he cried. My brother!—Awake—awake. O my brother:—How pale!—His eyes are fixed! The blood streams from his head!—Miserable that I was—Ah! what am I now?—Infernal horrors.

Thus he cried aloud, and furiously threw from him the bloody club: then with violence struck his temples. He stooped to the dead body, and endeavoured to raise it from the earth, crying, Abel!—my brother!—awake! Ah! what tortures do I feel!—How his head hangs:—

hangs :—how it bleeds ! how helpless !—Dead !—O anguish insupportable :—he is dead. My crime is without remedy.—I fly—whither fly ? My tottering knees will scarce bear me. Having thus spoke trembling he hid himself among the bushes.

The seducer, with triumph in his look, remained near the dead. Elate with pride, he stretched his gigantic form to its full height, and his countenance was not less dreadful than the black pillar of smoke, arising from the half-consumed lumber of a lonely cottage is to the inhabitants, who returning from their peaceful labours, find all their conveniences, all their riches, the prey of the devouring flames. Anamelech followed the criminal with his eyes, while a ruthless smile spoke his exultation. He then cast on the bleeding body a look of complacency. Pleasing sight ! said he, I see for the first time this earth wet with human blood. The flow of the sacred springs of Heaven, before the fatal hour when the Master of the universe, precipitated us from those seats of bliss, never gave half this pleasure. Never did the harmonious harps of the archangels give such delight, as the sighs of the brother murdered by a brother. And thou the noblest of thy Maker's works : thou last best effort of his creating hand, what a despicable figure dost thou make ! Rise beautiful youth ! Rise, thou friend of angels ! This indolence in thine orisons ill becomes the worship of thy God ! But he stirs not. His own brother left him weltering in his blood. No, that honour is mine. I guided the arm of the

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fratricide.

fratricide. It is by actions, such as Satan himself would boast, I shall rise above the vile populace of Hell. I hasten to the foot of the infernal throne. The vast concave of the fiery gulph will reverberate my praises. I shall move in triumph through crouds of ignoble spirits, whom no hardy atchievement has dignified, and look down with scorn on those, who till now were counted my equals. Inflated with arrogance, he turned once more to glut his eyes with a last view of the victim; but the hideous traces of despair instantaneously dissipated his ironic smiles, and effaced the triumphant pride which sat on his expanded brow. The Lord commanded, and he was seized with infernal horrors: he was overwhelmed by a deluge of torture. He now cursed his existence: he cursed eternity replete with torments and yelling fled.

The last sighs of the dying ascended to the throne of God, and demanded of Eternal Justice vengeance on the murderer. Thunder was heard from the holy sanctuary. The golden harps ceased to sound. The eternal hallelujahs were interrupted. Three times the thunder echoed through the lofty arch of heaven. This awful sound was succeeded by the majestic voice of God, issuing from the silver cloud that encompassed his throne. It summoned an archangel; the lucid spirit advanced towards the seat of the most high, veiling his face with his effulgent wings; and God said, Death hath made his first prey on man; henceforth be it thy function to assemble the souls of the just. I myself spoke to
that

that of Abel when he fell. When the righteous man is languishing in the cold sweat of death, be thou at his side; by assuring him of eternal felicity in these moments of anxiety, when his soul trembling at the view of his past life, dreads a separation from its dust, thou shalt then calm his fears, and inspire him with confidence. Thou shalt turn his eyes from my rigorous justice, and fix them on my long suffering and tender mercies. Hasten now towards the earth to meet the soul of Abel; thou Michael go with him, and declare to the murderer the sentence pronounced against him. Thus spoke the Eternal, and again the thunder thrice echoed through the lofty arch of heaven. The archangels with rapid wing, passed through the celestial ranks. The gates of the divine abode spontaneously opened to the heavenly messengers, they traversed the boundless expanse on all sides resplendent, amidst suns without number, and alighted on the earth.

The angel of death called forth the soul of Abel from the ensanguined dust; it advanced with a smile of joy. The more pure and spirituous parts of the body flew off, and mixing with the balsamic exhalations, wafted by the zephyrs from the flowers which sprung up within the compass irradiated by the angel, environed the soul, forming for it an ethereal body. It saw with a transport till then unknown, the bright messenger coming towards it.

I salute thee, said the celestial spirit, while benignity and joy beamed in his eyes: I salute thee

thee, happy soul, now disengaged from thy encumbering dust. Receive my embraces; it is to me an increase of felicity, that I am chosen by the Most High to introduce thee into the realms of light and bliss, where Myriads of angels wait to hail thee. Conceive if thou canst, beloved soul! conceive what it is to behold God face to face—to have communion with him for ever. Thou art going to experience the riches of his grace, the wonders of his love. Thou wilt soon know the immense rewards with which he recompenses virtue. O thou who hast first laid down thy covering of dust, be cloathed in light I once more embrace thee.

Permit me also to embrace thee, celestial friend, replied the soul: and overpowered by the extatic sense of its beatitude, it reclined on the angel. Delight extreme! bliss inexpressible: While my soul was imprisoned in the perishing clay, from which it is now released, I mediated in solitude, by the mild and soft light of the unclouded moon, on the charms of virtue, on the glories of God. These sublime objects even then, elevated me above myself, and I experienced, without knowing it, a faint dawn of felicity I at present taste. But how much more attractive now are the charms of virtue! how are my ideas of the Divine attributes exalted and enlarged; what new thoughts; what are now the beauties of the spring! O sun, where is now thy dazzling lustre? The enraptured soul again embraced the angel, and continued to utter its transports. Eternity now is mine. All sublunary
cares

cares are at an end. I shall for ever be employed in praising my God, who with unbounded beneficence bestows never ending felicity on the soul that pants after virtue, and delights in the beauty of goodness. For ever shall I exalt his name; for ever shall I enjoy ineffable bliss; for I shall see him as he is.

Thus did these two happy spirits interchange reciprocal endearments, and the sweet embrace.—Follow me, said the archangel, follow my flight. Let us quit the earth? nothing here can now be dear to thee, but the virtuous. Regret not to leave them behind: for after a few more rising and setting suns, they too will partake of your felicity. At present the celestial choir waits with ardent expectation thy coming. Haste to embrace your new friends, and join with them in incessant hallelujahs to the Eternal.

I follow thee, replied the righteous soul; into what a torrent of delight and felicity art thou conveying me, dear and respectable friend, whose nature is so far superior to mine? O my beloved kindred, whom I leave still embodied in the dust; who must still remain in this vale of tears: when the days of your life are fulfilled, when the hour of your desolation is at hand, and the celestial introducer of souls shall descend to meet you, I will accompany him; for at the foot of the Almighty's throne I will beg this grace. With what joy shall I see your pure and holy souls rise from this seat of corruption, from this region of death! and thou too Thirza, my dear and tender companion! when thou halt
yet

yet a little longer wept over my mouldering dust, and hast reared to virtue the infant that now but begins to prattle forth its thoughts, thou must be the prey of death. What rapture; when thy soul quitting the cold clay, shall fly into mine arms.

Thus spoke Abel and rising in the air, began to loose sight of the earth. As his eyes were taking a last look of the dwellings, whose inhabitants were still dear to him, he beheld his brother; remorse was imprinted on his countenance; his clenched hands were held over his head; he suddenly lifted up his eyes to heaven, then frantic with despair, struck, with repeated blows, his throbbing breast: he cast himself in agony on the earth, and rolled in the dust. Tears of compassion burst from the eyes of the happy, and he turned aside from the the frightful scene. His heavenly conductor was joined by multitudes of angels; the tutelar spirits of the earth surrounded the celestial traveller: they congratulated the soul of Abel on its deliverance from sin and death; they embraced him in holy rapture, and having escorted him to the confines of the terrestrial atmosphere, they reclined on a crimson cloud, and to the soft lute and silver harm, joined the melody of their celestial voices, chanting in chorus.

He rises! the new inhabitant of heaven rises to his native land. Render him homage, ye brilliant constellations, which roll in the immensity of space: render homage with Gladness to the fruitful earth your companion. What glory to that opaque sphere, to have

have nourished in its dust, a being prepared for the joys of immortality ! Glow ye fields with brightest verdure ; reflect ye hills a purer light.

He rises ! the new inhabitant of heaven rises to his native land. Legions of angels wait his arrival at the celestial portels. With what rapture will they welcome their new companion to the seats of bliss ; they will crown him with unfading roses. What will be his transport, when he traverses the flowery fields of heaven ; when under aromatic bowers of eternal verdure he joins the angelic choir in their song of praise ; ascribing glory, honour, power, and dominion, to the source of happiness, the sole principle of all good.

Already have we celebrated the day when his soul descended from the hands of his Creator, and entered into its body of earth.—Already, festive day ! hast thou been celebrated, and we will still celebrate thee. We saw his young mind improve in every virtue. It hastened to maturity and strength, like the lilly in the spring. We have seen with joy, his aspirations to perfections ; invisible, we have beheld the uniformity of life, the consistency of his actions. We have joined in his devote praises, we have sympathized in his tender sorrow. His virtuous tears have given joy to the angels. Virtue was his motive and guide. For ever shall he enjoy the rewards of virtue.

He rises ! the new inhabitant of heaven rises to his native land. Receive him ye sons of light ! crown him with celestial roses ! Honour him
him

him whom the Most High delighteth to honour. Yonder like a faded flower, lies the dust he hath abandoned. Parent earth, receive in thy bosom, again receive the precious dust. Each spring it shall produce odoriferous flowers. Each year we will solemnize the day in which his righteous soul quitted the earth. Thus they sung, then borne on their lucid cloud descended to the earth.

Cain wandered in despair among the bushes. He roved from place to place: but change of situation decreased not the horror that had lodged in the convulsed heart. Thus the traveller in vain quickens his pace; in vain exerts his skill and strength to avoid an irritated serpent; the reptile pursues him with his poisonous breath; it encircles his limbs; it fixes its sting: Where shall he fly from torture? already convulsions seize his wounded breast, the mortal poison flows to his heart. So Cain vainly strove to fly his pain. Oh! that I could no more see the streaming blood! he cried. I fly, but the blood follows me still—still it runs to my feet. Where shall I fly—Where?—Miserable that I am—his last look?—What have I done? the dreadful deed is the work of hell—I already feel its tortures! I have with him murdered his unborn offspring—Ah, what noise is that among the bushes? Why sighs the dead!—Away, haste my feet far away from the pursuing blood—far away from the dreadful sight of death;—Drag me away ye trembling knees, sprinkled with a brother's blood to hell. At these words he walked with fast and unequal steps.

A black

A black cloud alighted at his feet, from the midst of which issued a voice, saying, Cain, where is thy brother?—I know not—miserable me!—am I my brother's keeper? answered he stammering and retreating back, pale as the lifeless corpse of Abel. Loud thunders now burst from the cloud; the Grass and bushes blazed around him, and Michael, the archangel, stood before him arrayed in terror. On his majestic brow were imprinted the menaces of the Lord. In his right hand he held the forked lightening, and extended his left arm over the appalled sinner. He spoke, and it again thundered. Stop, tremble! Hear thy sentence. Thus saith the Lord: What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me. Thou art curst on the earth, which hath drank the blood of thy brother, shed by thy hand. To thee it shall be barren, and thou shalt be a vagabond on its surface. The terrified sinner was mute and immoveable: his head bent, and his eyes fixed on the Ground, while his heart was torn with anguish, like that of the impious Atheist, when God, terrible in judgment, shakes the earth, and he sees the profaned temples and the sumptuous palaces of sinners shake to their foundations, and fall into ruins, while his ears are terrified with the Groans of the dying, the sobs of Grief, and the shrieks of despair. In this convulsion of nature, thick smoke and flames burst from the cleft earth. Wild with horror he attempts to fly. He staggers on the tremulous Ground. He reels. He falls. Equal terror shook the fratricide.

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He attempts to speak! but only inarticulate ~~stammering~~ came from his trembling lips, while dread still kept his eyes fixed on the earth. At length he cried in a voice, which spoke its anguish: My crime is too great—ah, much too great ever to be forgiven! Now, O inexorable God! Thou has cursed me on the earth, and—Where can I hide myself, from thy presence?—Banished from society—a vagabond—the first who meets me will slay me, and rid the earth of an infamous murderer.

A vengeance seven-fold more dreadful than thine, shall fall on him who sheds thy blood, said the angel, speaking again in thunder.

Dark disquietude and gnawing remorse are strongly imprinted on thy brow. By these marks shalt thou be known, and all on seeing thee, shall quit the path made by thy wandering feet, crying, there goes Cain the murderer.

The angel having thus announced the divine anathema, disappeared. Thunder again issued from the rising cloud: a dreadful whirlwind tore up the roots of the trees and bushes, with a noise that resembled the howling of malefactors, suffering under the agonies of penal torture.

Cain stood motionless. Despair glared in his eyes: yet fierceness was still seen in his bushy brows. The furious winds shook his erect hair. Wild fear, at length, forced from his livid and quivering lips, these horrid accents. Why has he not annihilated me?—Wherefore has he not annihilated me? that no traces of me might remain in the creation. Why was I not blasted by his lightnings?

Why

Why did not his thunder strike me to the depths of the earth? But his ire reserves me for perpetual sufferings—torments without end—Detested by my fellow creatures.—All nature abhors me—I abhor myself—already the attendants on guilt haunt me; shame, remorse, despair.—Shut out from human society, banished from God, I shall while on earth, feel the torments of Hell—I feel them now. Cursed be thou, O arm, which so hastily executed the impulses of passion, mayest thou wither on my body like the blighted limb of a tree! Cursed be the hour when a dream from hell deceived me! and thou, infernal fiend, who suggested it. Where art thou now? that I may curse thee! Art thou returned to Hell? mayest thou there suffer incessantly what I now feel! Nothing worse can I wish thee. This is your triumph, ye spirits of darkness! Gaze on, ye devils, and wonder at my misery.—Spent with agony he sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, and remained without strength or voice motionless as dead. Then starting cried, Ha, what noise is that? it is the voice of murdered Abel. He groans—I see his streaming blood! O my brother! my brother! in pity to my inexpressible anguish, cease to haunt me. He now continued sitting in speechless agony, sighs only bursting from his tortured heart.

In the mean time the father of mankind, with his amiable spouse, left their cottage, came forth to enjoy the fragrance and beauty of the early day; with what majesty does the sun dart his first rays, cried Eve, How they

gild the flimsy mist that hovers over yonder field; how charming the appearance of the country; let us walk on, Adam, amid the dew, till the hour of labour calls thee to the field, and me to our dwelling. O my beloved, the earth is still lovely; see Adam how all the creatures rejoice, each bush, each eminence pours forth their melody; the beasts too, how they frisk and bound, and chase each each other; with what gaiety and life do they welcome the morning rays.

Adam answered, yes my love, the earth is still beautiful; it still bears marks of the presence of God, and of his infinite Goodness, which our folly and ingratitude have not yet been able to exhaust. Yes, his mercy, his munificence, which exceed the power of words to express, are too great for the rejoiced heart to conceive. Let us hasten Eve, through these flowery fields to the smiling pastures, where Abel feeds his flock; perhaps we may find that amiable, that dutiful son, chanting his morning hymn, and in devout melody praising his Creator.

Dear Adam, returned Eve, let us first go to the field of Cain. I have in this basket brought a present for my eldest-born. I have culled out some of the best of my figs, and a few bunches of dried grapes. They will be an agreeable refreshment for him, when at mid-day he retires to the shade, faint and fatigued with labour. Let us go to him first, my spouse, for fain would I erase from his mind, the idea that he is not beloved by us, with the same affection that we love his brother.

How

How attentive, my dearest, is thy tenderness, replied Adam; I will accompany thee with joy to the fields of Cain; let us carry him thy present, that he may not say all our concern and love are lavished on Abel. May the serenity of this delightful morn dispose his heart to the impressions of tenderness. They now redoubled their pace, and walked towards the open country. How happy, said Eve, as she was going on, how happy should I think myself, if, when nature thus smiles, and awakens every sentiment of tenderness and joy, our first-born receives us with affection, if his heart is open to the soft sensations of filial love.

They now came from behind some bushes. Eve walking a little before, when suddenly stepping back she cried, with a tremulous voice, who lies there? Adam who lies there? he lieth not like one asleep—his face is on the Ground.—These Golden locks are Abel's—Adam why do I tremble?—Abel, Abel awake—awake my son—turn to me thy face; turn to me thy face;—awake, ah awake dear son, from a sleep that freezes me with terror! They approach nearer. What do I see cried Adam, trembling and retiring back. Blood! blood trickling from his temples! His head is covered with blood!—O Abel, O my son!—my son!—my dear son! cried Eve, lifting up his arm stiffened by death, then sunk pale as the object she lamented, on Adam's throbbing breast. Horror and Grief deprived them both of voice, when Cain, frantic with despair, came without design to the place where lay the
the

the dead body of his brother, and seeing near the corpse, his father motionless, and his mother pale and lifeless in his arms, he cried out trembling, He is dead!—I killed him—curs'd be the hour, O father of men, when thou begattest me! and thou woman, curs'd be the instant when thou broughtest me forth——He is dead!—I killed him! repeated he and fled.

Two lovers, united by a sense of their mutual perfections, enjoying sweet converse, sat near each other; a tempest suddenly arises; the subtle lightnings dart, the blue flame quivers over their heads. Each strives to succour each—alas! in vain; embracing still, they living seem, though void of life. Thus our first parents sat pale and silent, without sign of life, except an universal trembling. Adam first recovered from his lethargy of stupid grief; Where am I? he cried in broken accents. How I tremble! My God,—my God!—Ah there he lies!—wretched father!—What horror shakes my soul; how can I support the dreadful thought!—His brother killed him!—he has cursed us. O Abel, O my son! my veins are chilled; my blood runs cold. Ah miserable parent! one son has cursed thee, the other lies before thee embrued in his own blood. What evils, what torments have I brought upon myself, and on my wretched offspring.—And thou too Eve, awakest not;—How my terrors encrease; art thou dead too?—am I left alone the prey to anguish? Yet, O God, in the midst of desolation I adore thy decrees, I revere thy justice, I am a sinner. An icy coldness insinuates itself into my beating heart, My eyes fail,

fail. O death, why delayest thou? O Abel, O my dear son! He then again cast a look on the body; the tears flowed down his venerable face, and with them ran down the cold sweat. Thou at last awakest, dear Eve, he continued: but alas! to what inexpressible tortures dost thou awake! Ah what distress is seen in thy weeping eyes, dear companion of my misery.

Adam, replied Eve, in a fearful accent, is the murderer gone? The voice of cursing thunders no more—I no longer hear the voice of his cursing. Curse me—me alone, barbarous fraticide, I was the first sinner. O my child?—my child?—O Abel, my dearest son? She now sunk from the arms of Adam on the dead. My son—my son, she cried, speaking to the insensible clay: thine eyes are fixed; no more they turn on me.—Awake, awake?—Alas I call in vain: he is dead?—That is death—the death with which we were threatened when cursed by God after the fall. O insufferable torment? I was the first sinner?—O my husband? spouse beloved and dear? thy tears rend my heart. It was I that seduced thee. Of me—of me, O weeping father demand thy son's blood. Of me your brother, my wretched children?—me—me curse, murderer of brothers? but spare your father—I was the first sinner? O my son? my son? thy blood rises against me?—it accuses me? unhappy parent? Thus lamented the mother of the human race, while her tears streamed on the congealing blood.

Adam

Adam cast on his wife, looks full of tenderness and Grief: Dear Eve, said he, what exquisite pangs thou givest my bursting heart? Cease, I intreat thee, cease thus to torment me? I conjure thee, by our miseries, by our tender love, I conjure thee, to cease thus reproaching thyself? We both have sinned, we both are guilty. The bitter consequences of our crimes are but too sad remembrancers of our ingratitude and folly. But the Almighty, whom we have offended, the God who chastises us, still regards with a pitying eye.—Yes, my God? we are yet allowed to supplicate thee in our distress. Thou hast not utterly destroyed the sinner. We yet live, Eve, and our souls are out of the reach of death. It can only strip us of this body, subject to pain and Grief. Our immortal souls will, if we are virtuous, triumph over death, and enjoy permanent felicity in the realms of happiness and Glory, where we shall behold the light of God's countenance, and incessantly praise him to all eternity. This, my beloved, ought to be our great consolation; but—his murderer is his brother. Ah! my first-born killed his brother.

Yes, dear son! cried Eve, her tears still flowing: death has delivered thee from solitude, Pain, and Grief. Thou art no more exposed to suffer. We should wish to follow thee. Alas, we must still endure tribulation and inquietudes, from which thou art now exempt. But can I cease to weep, while I remember thy virtue, thy piety, thy filial love? O Adam, what a sight of horror is that precious

cious body ! Where are those smiles, the sweet emanations of filial tenderness, that used to be seen on his countenance ? how faded, how livid are his bloody cheeks ! We shall no more hear from those lips seraphic harmony ! no more have our souls raised to God by his angelic converse ! no more will they express the endearing sensations of his heart !—Those eyes, now fixed in death, with what delight and transport have I seen them shed tears of joy, when I have given him signs of the love—the inexpressible love that warmed my heart, charmed with his spotless virtue : Ah my son ! thy weeping mother must forever deplore thy death. O sin, sin, dreadful are thy inroads ! what hideous forms dost thou assume ! Abel—dear Abel !—I thy mother, thine unhappy mother—exquisite woe !—am also the mother of the murderer !—Here her speech again failing, she remained motionless upon the cold corpse, void of sensation. When Adam, with a deep sigh, cried how am I abandoned ! All around me is a gloomy desert. Nature seems to have changed her face. No longer she seems to smile on me. Alas he is dead !—he who filled my life with soft consolation, sweet pleasure, and gladdening hope, is no more ! dear Abel ! is it true that thou art dead ?—Is it—can it be true that it was Cain—that horror of nature ; who—O God ! thou beholdest our desolation. O pardon—pardon our lamentations ! forgive us that we lie mourning in the dust like a worm (and what are we more in thy sight ?) like the trampled worm

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worm half crushed by the heedless foot of the passenger.

Adam now stood pale and silent, as the statue of grief on a mossy tomb, surrounded with funeral cypresses. At length he turned to the dead body of his murdered son, and stooping to Eve, he gently withdrew her feeble hand from the corpse, and pressed it with ardour to his breast. Eve, my dear companion, awake, said he, hanging over her: awake, dear spouse, awake. Turn thy looks on me! Cease to wash with tears the insensible dust. Sink not thus under the weight of grief. Has thy sorrow for thy son stifled all thy tenderness, all concern for me, thine husband? Turn, dear spouse, turn thy looks on me! It is just that we should feel, keenly feel our loss: that the horrors of death should terrify us. That we should mourn the fatal consequences of sin: but to be thus overcome by grief: thus overpowered by dejection, is criminal. It is as if we reproached Eternal Justice, as punishing with too much severity. O Eve, give not way to this culpable despair, lest Divine Mercy, irritated by our obstinacy, should deem us unworthy of consolation. Eve immediately turned her face from the body towards Adam, and raising her humid Eyes towards Heaven, said, forgive, O God! forgive my grief; pardon my tears. Do you, my dearest spouse, my love, my life, forgive my sorrow! my distress is beyond all words! yet thou still lovest me—me who seduced thee to commit the crime we now deplore.—Thou hatest me not, tho' this frightful murder of one of thy

thy sons by the other, is the result of my transgression. Ah Adam! let me weep in thine arms, let me once more weep on my child's body, and mingle my tears with his blood: She then pressed her face, bedewed with tears, on Adam's hand.

Thus grieved and lamented the parents of the human race over the first dead; when Adam, casting his dejected eyes around, beheld at a distance one of the celestial messengers; the fragrant flowers which sprung up at each step, indicated the light vestiges of his feet. His serene brow announced peace: consolation, amity and affection smiled on his lips and cheeks: and the sweetness of his eyes spoke sympathizing complacency. A white vesture, brighter than the clouds which surround the nocturnal planet, fluttered in waving folds on his beauteous form. The angel advanced towards them, while his presence seemed to enliven with fresher verdure the smiling country: Eve, said the father of men, raise thine eyes, dry up thy tears, suppress thy sighs, behold! one of the children of Heaven is coming to comfort us. See, with what benignity he approaches! Already my heart has lost a part of the oppressive load under which it groaned. I acquiesce, O my God! in thine appointments: I adore thy judgments: with gratitude and love I acknowledge thy mercies. Weep no more, Eve. Rise, let us meet the friendly angel.

Eve, supported by her spouse, arose, and the bright spirit stood before them. He regarded with attention the first prey of death:

but soon turned his eyes on Adam and Eve, whose faces now reflected the luminous brightness of the angel: and in a sweet and harmonious voice, said, Be blest, O ye who are weeping over the spoils of death in your son! May ye be blest! The Most High hath permitted me to visit you in your affliction.—Among the angels who are commissioned to watch over and guard the inhabitants of this earth, none loved Abel more than I. I was constantly near him, when the orders of the Eternal did not oblige me to be absent.

When his exalted soul, enflamed with the love of virtue, vented his rapturous sensations in tears of holy joy, or in devout hymns, which the tutelar spirits disdained not to sing in their concerts, I inspired him with such ideas of his future felicity, as it was possible he could be susceptible of while united to his dust. Weep not for him; mourn not for him, like the children of despair. He is happy. His immortal soul survives. Let this soften your grief. Death has only detached it from a weak and frail body. Without interruption or incumbrance, he now enjoys whatever can delight a wise and good being. His happiness far exceeds all you can imagine, while you only see through the dark medium of the senses. He is with the angels and archangels before the throne of God. Yet weep, my friends, he well deserved your love. Lament your loss; but let this unspeakable gain dry up your tears. You are not separated for ever. Soon shall the angel of death visit you also—soon will you be united to your beloved son, to
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part no more. The pale king of terrors will assume to each of you a different form ; but you will receive him as becomes the candidates for future happiness, and welcome him as a friend long expected. Listen, O Adam, to the order of thy God. Restore this corruptible body to its origin, the dust : dig a pit, cover it with earth. Thus spoke the angel, while benevolence and pity appeared in every look, and every gesture. Desolation fled. Despair was no more.

Adam, whose soul was calmed and revived by noble and elevated sentiments, viewing the dazzling lustre of the angel, as he withdrew, said, accept our grateful thanks, celestial friend ? Praised, praised for ever be thy name, O God Most High ; thy loving kindness, thy tender mercies are not withdrawn from the sinner. Thou with compassion dost behold our distress ; thou commandest thine angels to enlighten our souls, and bring us comfort. No longer will we mourn in the dust—no longer will we despair like the spirits of darkness, who are banished from thine all-enlivening presence. We are still surrounded by thy bounties : still permitted to praise thee, to supplicate thy favour, to adore thy wisdom, to celebrate thy goodness. Thus enobled, shall we repine and murmur at thy dispensations, if the thorns and briars of affliction are scattered in the way of our pilgrimage, to the bosom of our father to the dwelling of God ? We cannot indeed entirely restrain our tears for the unhappy deceased : we must regret his being thus suddenly snatched from our embraces :

embraces: but alas the unhappy criminal ought rather to be the object of our grief, the subject of our most earnest prayers. O God, what an alleviation would it be to our sorrows, if we dared to hope that thy mercy would not cast him off for ever. O my maker, he unhappy,—he miserable, is the first fruit of my loins, the first whom Eve brought forth with pain. Let us not cease, my dearest spouse, to implore the tender mercies of God for him. We will not doubt his loving kindness; we ourselves were sinners; we were unworthy of his infinite grace; yet he has encouraged us to confide in his promises. When all trembling we expected eternal chastisement, little did we hope for mercy. But let us not defer to execute the command of the Lord. I will carry this dear body to our dwelling, and there commit the precious dust to the earth.

O Adam, O my love, returned Eve, my soul emerges from overwhelming sorrow; conscious of my own weakness, I support myself by thy strength, as the flexible ivy clings to the firm oak.

Adam now, by the assistance of his weeping spouse, lifted the corpse on his shoulders, and sighing under the sad burthen, slowly moved towards the dwelling, while Eve walked weeping by his side.

THE
DEATH OF ABEL.

BOOK V.

NOW Thirza, whose sleep had been disturbed by terrifying visions, opened her eyes to the bright luminary of day, and precipitately quitted her bed. So leaps up the affrighted traveller, who, when spent with fatigue, had laid himself down under the shelter of a rock, when a terrifying dream, suggested by his guardian angel, represents to him the rock falling over him: trembling he hastens from the dangerous spot; an instant after the huge mass falls with hideous noise. He seeks the companion of his toilsome journey: but alas, he is crushed under the ruins. . Not less agitated was the wife of Abel; what frightful images have passed before me while I slept! they resemble nothing in nature. Welcome chearful light, thou hast scattered them. Hail we glowing flowers, sweet objects of my attentive care, your various odours, which the morning sun draws forth, will refresh my fatigued brain: and ye joyous inhabitants of the air, your soft melody will

will re-establish serenity in my soul. I will join your morning song. I will join, with re-animated nature, in praises to the Most High. Creator Almighty, my soul overpowered by thy Goodness, can but imperfectly express the immensity of thy benefits, and the extent of its Gratitude. Thy ever-waking providence guards thy creatures, when covered by the veil of night, sleep weighs down their eyelids. May my grateful thanks arise to thee, O God, accept from a feeble worm the tribute of praise.

She now left the dwelling, and walked among the open flowers, whose first sweets were diffused by the morning breeze. My heart still throbs said she, still anxiety is lodged in my breast. What means those unusual fears? an interior trembling seems to shake my very soul. My mind is darkened like the heavens, when black clouds spread thro' the expanse. Where art thou Abel? where art thou my beloved? dearest half of myself, I haste, pursued by gloomy terrors, to lose them in thy arms. I fly to thee with the speed that thou wouldest fly, if benighted in a dark forest, thy feet were winged by fear.

Having thus spoke, she redoubled her pace, when Mahala seeing her, ran from her cottage to meet her. I salute thee my dearest sister she cried. Whither art thou going in such haste, with thine hair disordered, without ornament, not so much as one flower? I go, replied Thirza, to throw myself into the arms of my beloved. Unusual terrors have this night disturbed my sleep, and my labouring heart

heart is oppressed with sad apprehensions, which the serenity of this delightful morning is not able to disperse. But though the blooming day, though the smiles of nature, cannot dispel my fears, I shall lose them in the gladdening presence of my husband; I therefore run to cast myself in his arms.

The spouse of Cain replied with a sigh, happy sister; alas, I have no such sweet resource, I should be lost to all consolation, were it not for a father who loves, and a tender mother to whom I am dear:—were it not for thee, my kind sister, and thine amiable husband. Yes, with you I lose part of the woe that Cain's discontent heaps on my head. To him, unhappy, all the beauties of nature are sources of melancholy, and he continually regrets the labour which his fertile fields so abundantly repay. But, my dearest Thirza, above all I lament his unkind and causeless dislike to our gentle brother. Mahala now melted into tears. Thirza wept also, and tenderly embracing her, replied, penetrated by the same idea, Abel and I spend many anxious hours in bewailing his inveterate hatred. Our resource is the hand of heaven; often, in sleepless nights, we send our most fervent petitions to God, that a beam of his grace may disperse the dark clouds from his breast; that every baneful weed may be rooted out from his heart, lest they choak all principles of humanity and virtue. Ah, my sister, was thy husband kind and gentle, again would pleasure bless our dwellings; and we should no longer with pain behold the brow of our venerable

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father wrinkled by care, nor the eyes of our fond mother swelled with weeping.

Mahala, still in tears, answered, This, this is the subject of my incessant prayers. When the earth is covered with darkness, while all nature is hushed, I bewail in silence the harsh obduracy of my spouse, and pray to the Lord to soften his heart. Sometimes the agony of my soul bursts forth in spite of myself, in sobs and groans. Then he awakes, and in a terrifying voice, accuses me of depriving him of sleep, the only good he enjoys on this wretched earth, so severely accursed by the Almighty avenger of sin. My dearest sister, this too is the employment of my mind, while my hands are busied in domestic labour. My innocent children playing around me, observe my tears, and demand, with infantine caresses, why I weep? Ah Thirza, Thirza, I am faded with grief, like a young flower, when the thick branches of some neighbouring tree, intercept from it the sun's all-cheering rays. My unhappy husband, this very day, left our dwelling before the dawn; his looks were terrible; never did I see so dark a gloom on his countenance. Anger flashed from his eyes; his brows were knit by rage. Frozen with horror, I heard him as he went forth curse the hour of his birth. This, my sister, was his salute to so fine a morning. 'Tis true I have not lost all hope; for sometimes (and thou thyself hast observed it) his virtue breaks through the gloom, and his mind his open to the soft sensations of social love. Then he acknowledges that he has injured us, asks forgiveness, and seeks

seeks reconciliation. But alas, too soon the light withdraws; as in the tempestuous days of winter, the sun darts a cheering ray, and is instantly hid from our eyes by the closing clouds. Let us hope Thirza, that as mild spring restores light and joy to all nature, so the heart of my unhappy husband may be restored to light and peace. For this we will incessantly petition heaven. I have always nourished this in the bottom of my heart.

Thus spake Mahala, when Thirza, pale and trembling, cried, What mournful sound is that? it comes from yonder trees—is it not the cry of pain—from yonder trees—O my sister!—Mahala—alas it comes nearer—O my God!—Thirza was now sinking to the ground, but her sister supported her in her arms.

Adam, with tottering steps, was coming from behind the trees, bending under the sad load of his son's lifeless body. Eve walked by his side; sometimes she turned her face, faded by grief, towards the bloody corpse: then hid it under her hair, dropping with her tears.

Thirza, continued pale and motionless in the arms of Mahala, who herself was ready to sink under the weight of her she endeavoured to sustain. Thus three amiable virgins, (but none ever felt such fond affection) in a summer's eve walk, hand in hand, over the variegated fields. Sudden the thunder roars, the rapid lightening tears the earth under their feet: terrified they fall: but soon recovering from their surprise, two of them rise, the third a cinder. The survivors are struck with

new horror, more dreadful than that caused by the thunder.

This was the situation of the two daughters of Adam, when a little recovering, they beheld the corpse of him they loved. The afflicted father had laid it on the grass, and was supporting in his arms his fainting wife, who, weakened by grief, was falling to the earth. Where am I! cried Thirza? O my God: where am I—How he lies?—Abel—Why did I awake? hateful light—Ah unhappy that I am—Mahala! ah me, miserable!—See, see my sister, he lies dead! fight horrible! why did I awake?

Thirza, cried Mahala, in a tremulous voice: let us not give way to vain terrors—to me—to me also the idea is dreadful as the forked lightening—Ah, she again faints—awake Thirza, awake—let us go to him. He is not dead: Thy voice, thine embraces, will rouse him from sleep.

After these words, the two sisters, leaning on each other, dragged their enfeebled limbs towards the body. Oh, my father, O my mother how they weep!—What dreadful terrors seize me, cried Thirza, as she approached near the corpse. Abel! dearest Abel!—my beloved!—my joy!—my life!—my husband!—awake. Ah unutterable woe—he awakes not!—Abel! hear my plaintive cries, the Groans of thy distressed wife!—She then cast herself on the body, to embrace it with extended arms; but at the sight of the blood, and fatal wound, she giving a terrifying shriek, fell on the earth without voice, motion,

motion, or sign of life; pale and cold as him she mourned. Despair was seen in her open and fixed eyes. Near her sat on the earth Mahala, dissolved in tears: wringing her hands, she sometimes raised her weeping eyes to heaven: sometimes she fixed them with eager attention on the bloody corpse.

Adam, whose deep Grief was augmented by the sorrow of his daughters, essayed to console them; O my dear children! O Thirza! O Mahala! said he; would to God my anguish could keep from pain the hearts of those I love: but my beloved, hear me; listen to the soft voice of consolation. While Eve and I were weeping over this dear body, an angel, replete in beauty, came to us. He was commissioned from the Most High to soothe our sorrows. Weep not, said he; be comforted. He whom you lament, still exists. He has only left this frail covering of dust. Disengaged from a mortal body, his soul is more happy than ye can conceive, while your souls are enveloped in this earthly covering. Ye are not separated forever: in a little time ye shall be re-united, ye shall enjoy with him torrents of delight, of which your gross senses can give you no idea. Let us not, my Thirza—let us not Mahala, prophane the funeral of the happy by our inconsolable lamentations—Let us not offend the Almighty by our despair.

Thirza still remained without sense or motion, while the wife of Cain, elevating her joined hands above her head, thus expressed her Grief, O my father! why do you blame
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our tears? Can we forbear to weep, Can we forbear to lament, while he lies before our eyes extended, cold and dead? O thou our consolation! our joy! O Abel! thou art lost to us, and our sweetest employment will be to weep for thee till the hour of death. Yes thou art in possession of never-ending Glory! thou enjoyest that beatitude after which thy holy soul so ardently panted, thou wilt forever join with the angels in their songs of praise to the Most High, we too hope to partake of thy felicity, when our All-merciful God shall call us from our sad exile, this house of sorrow, rendered more desolate by thy loss. Ah, Abel, ah, my brother! thou art lost to us, and our sweetest employment will be to weep for thee till the wish'd-for hour of death. Where wert thou, Cain, my spouse? where wert thou, when thy brother died? Hadst thou even then given him the fraternal embrace, and sought his forgiveness, with what affection would he have cast his weak arms around thee! though expiring, he would have blest thee, and implored for thee the divine consolations with his dying lips. What a sweet relief would his remembrance have been to thy sorrows! How would it have softened the Grievs of thy future days! But—O my mother!—what new woe makes thine eyes stream!—O my father speak—speak, I conjure thee—Why this horror in thy countenance!—No answer!—O my tortured heart!—Where—say where, O my father!—say, O my mother! where is Cain, my husband.

Eve

Eve replied, O my child! who knows where? pursued by divine vengeance—Ah my God!—the unhappy—but what do I say? I tremble to speak it—he—he—ah me, unhappy mother! Horrid——detestable ideas, tear not thus my wretched bosom! Ah miserable parent that I am! Why—he—ah my mother! interrupted Mahala, spare me not—spare me not, O my mother! On me—on me let the tempest fall—I am already crushed; already torn by frightful apprehensions. Cain—O Heavens! Cain has—killed him! cried Eve. Ah Mahala! Ah Thirza! Cain killed him! Her excessive Grief then took from her the power of speech.

Mahala was struck mute with terror. Her immoveable eyes shed no tears. The cold sweat trickled down her pale face, and her trembling lips were discoloured. At length she cried out in agony, He kill Abel!—Cain, my husband, kill his brother!—Where art thou fratricide? where? O where has thy guilt pursued thee? has the thunder of the Almighty God avenged thy brother? Dost thou cease to exist?—Where art thou most miserable? To what country of despair art thou fled, followed by the curse of God; Thus raved Mahala, tearing her hair.

Barbarous fratricide, vile murderer! exclaimed Thirza; how couldest thou kill so kind a brother: who, doubtless, when expiring under the mortal blow given by thy cruel hand, regarded thee with eyes full of love?—Ah Cain, curst—curst be—O my sister, O Thirza, cried Mahala, interrupting her,
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curse him not, he is thy brother, he is my husband! Rather for him let us implore the mercies of God. I am sure, when falling in his blood, the holy victim of his fury cast on him an eye of compassion, and I doubt not but he now intercedes for him at the eternal throne. Let our prayers ascend from the dust and join those of the happy. O curse him not; Thirza curse not thy brother.

Whither does the excess of my Grief transport me? answered Thirza. I did not curse him, my sister, I have not cursed the unhappy. Then reclining on the corpse, she kissed the blood-besprinkled cheeks, the cold and livid lips. She remained long silent, indulging fruitless sorrows. At length she cried with a faint and interrupted voice, Would to God my beloved, I had at thy death, kissed thy quivering lips; heard the last expressions of thy love; seen the last tender look, and received thy last embrace! Oh that I had then expired within thy arms!—but alas, I am left a prey to unutterable sorrow. Every object that used to inspire delight, will now increase my woes. Ye shady bowers, ye are now desolate, ye can now only inspire me with terror: I shall think you ask for him, who in your fragrant retreats, was wont to embrace me in tender rapture. The murmuring fountains will enquire, what is become of my beloved; left forlorn I can no more taste of joy. The shades, the streams, the hills, the plains alike to me are hateful. Alas! no more I see with fond delight, him that made all things lovely. I shall indeed still behold him; but
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oh, distressing object, I shall behold these wan cheeks, these fixed and sightless eyes, this clotted blood, this dreadful wound. Flow, flow my tears, forever on this pale face. What dignity once appeared on this faded countenance? the charms of soft persuasion dwelt on these cold and stiffened lips. Every beauty, every Grace shone in his lovely form: but his soul too pure, too holy to converse with mortals, to converse with me, is fled for ever! Stream my eyes, stream without ceasing on this withered corpse, till my longing soul leaves its dust with his.

Thus lamented Thirza, while her tears ran on the senseless body. Eve's Grief was increased by the sorrow of her daughters. My dearest children she cried, cease, I entreat you, cease thus to tear my heart! Your tears, your sighs and Groans, augment my miseries; they are to me the most cutting reproaches. 'Tis I, 'tis I that have filled the souls of those I love with anguish! My folly, my guilt has undone us all; I alas, introduced sin and death! Forgive me, O my children! forgive your afflicted mother! I conjure you by the pangs I suffered to bring you into the world, to forgive me! Cease to tear my heart by your immoderate sorrow. Mahala and Thirza ran to her, and with looks of duteous affection, said, O our mother, our dearest mother, who broughtest us forth with pain, whose kind cares guarded us in our infancy, aggravate not our distress by thy despair. We meant not by our complaints to reproach thee, our dear, our tender mother. We love, we reverence,

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we honour thee, but we cannot command our Grief: it will burst from our bosoms and eyes in sighs and tears. How can we restrain these expressions of a love the most tender! they are the voice of nature.

They still clasped their mother's knees, while their weeping eyes were tenderly fixed on her's, when Adam said, O my beloved! let us no longer defer restoring this precious dust to the earth as the Lord our God hath commanded. The lenient hand of time will abate our Grief and dry our tears. Victorious reason will teach us to conquer this unavailing sorrow. We shall long, ardently long to partake of his happiness, as the bride wishes for the day that is to unite her to her beloved. Yes, commit this dear body to its parent earth, replied Thirza, turning her pale and faded face to Adam; but suffer me, O my father, to weep a little longer ere it is hid for ever, in the dear, the precious dust! suffer me once more to press the cold clay to my breast. At these words she threw herself, with extended arms, on the corpse.

Adam now began to dig a pit in the earth, while Eve and Mahala stood weeping near him. When the Golden-hair'd Eliel, and little Josiah, Cain's two infant sons, approached hand in hand to the spot where lay the body. Brother—Josiah, said Eliel, who's that that sobs so loud? Let's go nearer brother. Ah, that's Abel?—'tis Abel our uncle; how pale he is;—his hair is all bloody; he lies like a lamb going to be burnt on the altar.—My dear Eliel, replied Josiah, see how Thirza weeps for him; he

He don't mind her tears, he don't look at her; I tremble—I am frightened—Let us run to our mother. See, see, she weeps too. He now hastened to Mahala, on the other side of the Grave, and clinging about her, said, O mother, why do you weep? why does Abel lie there? why is he all bloody, like a lamb for the sacrifice? Mahala tenderly embraced the infants, while her tears ran on their little heads, and said, my dear children, Death hath taken his soul from the body. It is carried up to heaven to dwell there with God and his angels, where it will be for ever happy. Then he will wake no more, replied Eliel, bursting into tears; he will never awake. He that loved us so dearly, and used to set us on his knee, and tell Josiah and me such fine stories about God, the angels, and the wonders of Nature. Ah brother!—ah Josiah! we shall never more hear Abel sing hymns! He will talk to us no more!—He will never, never wake! How our father will weep for him, when he comes from the field!—How pale—How frightful! The terrified children now hide their faces in the folds of their mother's vestment.

Adam having finished digging the Grave, wake thou, said he, to Thirza: wake my beloved. Let us obey the Divine command, and return the dust to its mother earth. Wake, my Thirza, he continued, and tenderly took her hand to raise her from the corpse. She had been in a kind of a trance on the body of her husband, and now waked from the holy vision. Yes I have seen him!—I have seen him!—

she cried as she arose. He came to me shining in celestial lustre. Weep not, he said; weep not my dearest Thirza, I am happy. Soon shalt thou partake my bliss in the abodes of felicity and glory, where there is no death to separate us. At these words he disappeared, having cast on us a divine smile; an heavenly light marked the traces of his feet. Thus she spoke, and consolation sublime illumined her visage. Inter, O my father, inter, said she, this covering of dust. And immediately went to her mother and sister. They all three hid their faces under their dishevelled tresses, while Adam wrapt in skins the body of his son. He laid it in the pit, and covered it with earth, and then said, let us my dear wife! let us my dear children! adore the Most High before this grave of the first dead. They now all prostrated themselves before the grave, little Eliel and his brother kneeling on each side their mother, and the father of men pronounced in a loud voice this prayer, with his arms devoutly folded on his breast.

O thou who dwellest in the highest heaven, God, Creator, Justice Eternal, Goodness Infinite! behold us prostrate before the grave of our beloved son. We sinners kneel before thee in the dust. O may our prayer ascend to thy celestial throne: look with an eye of compassion on us, O God, in the valley of death, this abode of sin; our iniquities are great, but thine infinite goodness is still greater. We are polluted in thy sight: thou beholdest our impurities; yet thou hast not turned thy face from us; thou still vouchsafest to look on

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us in our misery with a propitious eye. Thou permittest us to implore thee; thou hast not abandoned the sinner; eternal praises rise to thee; thy works, O God, render thee praise. The beauties of spring, the serenity of the heavens shew forth thy beneficence: the loud voice of thy thunder, the rattling hail, the howling storm proclaim thy power. Smiling joy glorifies thee; thy justice is also glorified by the tears of sorrow. We have beheld the son of sin, frightful death. He is come to our dwelling, in a form most hideous. Guilt led him by the hand, the earth groaned, and black tempests gathered round the direful pair.—The first fruit of my loins—ah, I tremble—my first-born has embrued his hands in his brother's blood. O God, merciful and gracious, though I presume to supplicate thee for him, turn not thy face from me. O God of Clemency, cast him not off for ever. When he mourns in the dust for his offences, when he trembles at his crime, when overwhelmed by torturing remorse, he weeps, he groans, and prostrates himself with great contrition before thee. O my God, look with a pitying eye on his misery: commiserate his despair, and assuage his anguish by thy divine consolations. O my Maker, cast him not off for ever. Reject not the presumptuous petition; may our prayers, our cries ascend to thy sublime throne from this grave of the first dead. We have, according to thy command, restored the perishing dust to the earth. Hear us Lord, while we cry unto thee in behalf of our first-born. Let him not perish in thy wrath: for
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this grace, O God, we will supplicate thee at the rising and setting sun : in the silent hours of night, when all nature is hushed to rest, we will implore thee for him. O God of consolation, cast him not off for ever ; eternal praises be rendered to thee, who hast received the soul of the happy deceased into the regions of never-ending felicity. Death has seized the first victim.

We shall follow one after another to the dark and silent Grave : but adored be thy loving kindness, adored be thy tender mercies, we shall likewise follow him to the realms of immortality and bliss. O thou who createdst the Heavens ! at whose word this world arose from nothing ! they shall perish, the Heavens and the earth shall pass away ; but thou art eternal. We dwell in bodies of dust. This dust shall be dissolved ; but thou art unchangeable, and wilt raise to glory the sinner who deplores his crimes, and the righteous man who mourns that his virtues are mixed with imperfections, and his highest attainments sullied by human frailty. Thou wilt gather them together out of the dust, to bestow on them eternal joys, angelic purity ; for—O promise ineffable ; the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Leap for joy, O earth ! chant forth the praises of the Most High, all nature. We will glorify his name in the midst of calamity. Man is fallen : he is degraded from his original dignity ; but glory be to God, he hath not cast him off.—He hath not rejected him forever : his mercy beholds the work of his hands from
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the seat of judgment : He fell whom God created upright, yet when after his fatal transgression, the sinner full of anguish stood trembling in fearful expectation of an eternal curse, and what less could he expect ? that (let men and angels celebrate the glorious mystery) then the Almighty pronounced that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Mystery sublime, mystery profound ! wrapt in an holy obscurity, which no finite being can penetrate : but full of divine consolations.

The sinner is reconciled to God ; the offender is restored to peace and hope. Shall man then lament in the dust ? shall he groan in despair, if the dream of life is alternately filled with joy and sorrow ? Death approaches, it shall break the shackles of the soul, and free it from the consequences of a just malediction. Then those, who, while clothed in dust, forgot not their original purity, who loved virtue, who loved God, who kindled in their hearts the seraphic flame, shall be assembled together in the mansions on high, to enjoy there incessant, internal felicity.—I see them, the holy assembly are present to my view, numerous beyond computing, pure as the flame which descends on the sacred altar ; they stand surrounded by angels before the throne. They behold the face of God. They delight in his Goodness. Beatic vision ; transporting prospect ; how is my soul raised ; how is my heart expanded ; raptures before unknown ; O Goodness infinite ; Grace inexpressible ; lost in thine immensity, the first archangel can but

but imperfectly exprefs his fenfations ;—man can only feel them.

Adam ceased to fpeak ; but continued in filent ecftacy prostrate on the earth : his wife and daughters ftill kneeling by his fide.—Nature herfelf obferved the fame filence : all was ferene ; not a cloud paffed over them thro' the lucid fky.

Now came on “ mild evening clad in fober grey,” while every breeze was hufhed. During this perfect calm, Cain, purfued by guilt, was agitated with fear, horror, remorse, and fad difmay. He roved from place to place, he wandered in the defarts, till fpent with fatigue, he fat down facing the rifing moon, and thus the voice of his defpair difturbed the peaceful filence that reigned over all nature. There beyond that dark hill the moon begins her courfe, fpreading around a faint light. All under the ftarry expanfe imbibe a new life from invigorating fleep ; man only wakes ; my accursed hand has driven from his dwelling peace and reft ; the voice of Grief and lamentation afcends from the cottages. 'Tis I, 'tis I, miserable, that have brought affliction to their abodes ; the cries, the Groans of my bewailing parents, arife to heaven as fo many accusations againft me. This day, this accursed day, hear it O moon, turn pale and hide thy beams ; hear it, ye ftars, and fet in darknefs : this day the earth has drank the blood of the firft flain, fhed by unnatural hand. Henceforth withhold from me your precious influences, bright luminaries ; Cursed on the Ground I tread, banifhed from the chearful

cheerful face of man. Hide me, hide me in the gloomy darkness. I have shed my brother's blood. I have torn the heart of him that begat me; I have filled with despair the breast of her who brought me forth and nourished my infancy. Hide me from the eyes of nature. I have trampled on her dictates. I will fly, fly with misery, sad companion, to some desert region, where no human foot has marked the faded grass. I will dwell among the rocks and precipices, where putrid water trickles in tears from the steeps into the swampy abodes of loathsome reptiles, where birds of prey build their nests; where savage beasts devour their bloody carnage: alas, even these will abhor me, they kill no brothers. Shade me, darkness, from the cheering sky; shade me, some horrid gloom, from the sight of every creature; there let me lament my cruelty, there howl out my despair. When sleep overcomes me, terrors will present themselves to my imagination: I shall behold my murdered brother—I shall see his wounded head; his clotted blood.

Thus Cain beheld his wretchedness. He ceased and sat abandoned to mute grief; no bird of night disturbed the awful stillness; frightened by sounds of human woe, they had fled in silence; a gentle murmur only floated through the air. Again he vents his sorrows, and casting his melancholy eyes around, he cries, pity me, ye woods; weep for me, ye fields, no words can describe my misery, and pity is due to misery. O nature, arrayed in
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beauty, grieve for me—for me, lost to beauty and happiness; mourn for me each creature; ye taste, ye feel the efficacious presence of a gracious God, to me no longer gracious. I feel his wrath, I tremble at his power. He is to me only God the Avenger, the just Avenger of my brother's blood. Forever will it cry against me; my punishment is endless.

He was now silent for some moments, then, with a deep sigh, he said, I weep; can such a wretch as I shed tears? Welcome precious drops, ye attest to me, that my miseries are softened. The despair which had seized my soul is changed to plaintive grief—to weeping sorrow. Ah flow my tears, receive them, O earth; I am cursed on thy surface, thou hast drank my brother's blood, yet, oh receive these tears which shew my unspeakable distress;—What new emotions;—How is my heart softened; my tears flow faster——Yes I will—Yes, while darkness hides me from every eye, I will away to the dwelling of my afflicted parents, to poor Thirza, I will go to all, and once more see them—once more bless them—Bless them; the angry winds would disperse the salutations, as they came from my polluted lips. Ah, fratricide, canst thou pronounce a blessing, thyself accursed; I will, however, go and strive to bless them in their grief, I will weep before them, and in the dust deplore my guilt, and then—yes then I fly for ever from their reproaching eyes. Fly from thee Mahala. I fly for ever from my children. Here his agony stifled his words, and

and he moved towards the cottages, watering with his tears the solitary way.

He was now passing a little grove, planted by the hand of Abel near the spring. Cain then remembered, that his brother, when he had completed this work, had said, with fond affection, Flourish ye trees, spread wide your branches, may ye for ever bloom, that under your refreshing shade our descendants may, in affectionate converse, relate to their offspring what they will learn from us, saying, Here Eve brought forth her first-born; here she soothed with her caresses his infant cries, him the first solace in her sad exile. Here she viewed him with inexpressible rapture. She called him Cain, saying, from the hand of the Lord have I received thee. The murderer passed by this monument of his brother's tenderness with quickened step: a remorseful sweat covered his averted face; his trembling knees could scarce sustain his weight. Thus at the sight of his father's grave, trembles the parricide, who with murderous dissimulation had invited the good old man, returning from the field to fly; but in vain he strove; he sunk refreshed himself with impoisoned viands. When he passes the tomb, the rustling of the trees which surrounded it, the odours of the garlands, with which his duteous sisters have crowned the urn, raise a storm in his guilty heart.

Now Cain had passed the terrifying grove, and drew near the cottages. The pale moon shed on them a feeble light through the trees,

and melancholy silence reigned around. He cast on the dwellings his weeping eyes; he raised his hands to heaven, he wrang them in speechless agony. Conscious guilt tore his now softened heart; trembling he stood amidst the dreary stillness. At length he uttered, in a low voice, this impassioned soliloquy. How quiet deep affliction rests here; ah that murmur. Are they not sighs? they came from the cottages—from the cottages; from the dwellings come those piercing ejaculations of sleepless grief. Here, here ye once cheerful mansions—here, trembling in darkness, stands the wretch who has made you the abodes of sorrow—Here, pursued by infernal horrors, shudders in obscurity, he who has chased from the habitations of those who gave him life, peace, joy, and every domestic sweet. Dare I breathe the air through which ascend the sighs of my mourning parents, my terrified wife, my widowed sister. Dare I appear in a spot consecrated to just grief; grief for my crime!—Begone, pollute not the residence of virtue.—Yes, I go, I go far from you—But let my eyes, hagger'd with despair, yet a little longer behold your dwellings. In pity to my unspeakable anguish, allow me to weep here a little longer. Suffer me to raise to heaven my bloody hands for your happiness. Then I go—hail, hail ye,—ah wretch, wilt thou profane their sacred names? Wilt thou pollute with thy infected breath, titles that express the softest ties, the most exalted sensations of the human heart? Oh that with the gloom of night,

night, your distress, your terrors might leave you to dwell in my wretched bosom, fit companions in my wanderings on an earth whose curse I have encreased. O that I alone could endure the punishment due to my crime!—May your memories never be disturbed by my horrid image; O that I myself could lose all remembrance of myself; dreadful wish of extreme desolation.

Cain having thus spoke, remained still near the cottages. He groaned, he raised his eyes to heaven, when he heard the footsteps of one advancing slowly through the gloom. A cold shivering, like the agonies of death, seized his limbs. He strove down, trembling without strength, among the bushes.

Thirza, the first night of her sad widowhood, unable to sleep, had quitted her lonely bed. She left her cottage, and went to the Grave of her husband, where seating herself on the damp Grass, she wept among the clods. She viewed with fixed eyes the starry firmament, then turning to the Grave, said, Here lies all that made life desirable; all my repose, all my joy lies under this earth, which now imbibes my tears. Sleep has forsaken my wearied eye lids: no rest remains for me. Flow on, flow on my tears, ye are my sole consolation; my melancholy hours shall be spent in bewailing thy loss, my dearest husband! shall be spent near thy precious remains in gloomy sadness! 'Tis true I have seen thee,—I have seen my love arrayed in heavenly glory: but ah! I am deprived of his
sweet

sweet society, his tenderness, his endearing care, through the remainder of a life of calamity and wretchedness. In vain I tried to rest on the conjugal couch: my spirits forsook me: I almost fainted, while the sweet pledge of our love lay by me, locked in the arms of sleep. The little innocent smiled in his guiltless slumbers. Alas, he knows not yet the woes of mortals. Alas, he knows not yet his own irreparable loss! Ah my infant, I deplore thy misfortune, for ever deprived of a tender father, an instructor of thy childhood, a guide to thy youth, and the friend to thy ripper years. Thy wretched mother a prey to keen distress, torn by heart-piercing anguish will want the strength, will want the wisdom to supply thy loss. O my child how are we bereaved! how is every comfort ravished from us! Horrid reflection! ravished from us by the hand of a brother. Where is he? Where is the miserable?—where has his remorse, where has his despair driven him? O Thou Infinite Clemency! God Propitious! despise not my supplications, turn not from my prayer, while with unwearied fervor I entreat thee for him. Hear him, O God of Grace and Consolation, when he cries to thee from the dust—when in deep penitence and sincere contrition of heart, he bewails his crime, and implores thy mercy.

Her agony of soul now stopt her voice: but soon she cried, as she raised her weeping eyes to heaven, Bright star of night, often hast thou been witness of our chaste endearments, when
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thy soft light illumin'd our path, Often hast thou been witness to his sublime converse, when he described the charms of virtue; the delights of an approving conscience. Thou now canst only shed thy beams on his silent Grave. Buried in this dust lies every human excellence: the consolation, the hope, the joy of his weeping parents! Here sleeps to wake no more, my love, my life, my husband! She now continued long silent, abandoned to speechless Grief. At length surveying the objects round her, she fixed her melancholy eyes on the fragrant enclosure, where her and her dear companion used to pass their most delightful hours. Ah! lovely bower! she cried; thou now art solitary. In vain the pale moon pierces thy aromatic shades. There, dear departed Abel! the ruddy evening saw thee pour forth thy soul in holy rapture. The remembrance of thine intense devotion, thy fervent piety, thy humble love, has lighted up in my heart a secret fervor. I will rise above this Grief. The darkness of my soul is dispelled by the dear remembrance, as the rising moon chases from the horizon the Gloom of night, O my beloved! in yonder sweet retreat, how has devotion animated thine eyes! How wert thou raised above mortality, when thou in the joyful exultation of thine heart saidst, What an happiness is it, my dearest Thirza, to be virtuous! What a privilege it is to be permitted to supplicate, to love him from whom all these beauties are but emanations? What unspeakable felicity, to be conscious

scious that the angels who surround us approve of our actions! What, my beloved wife, he added, taking my hand, What delight is there in this creation, that can be compared to the constant assurance of the Divine presence!—to the consciousness of virtue. To him who departeth not from his integrity, who panteth after perfection, death itself has lost many of its terrors. We know—let the sinner exult in the inexpressible mercy!—we know that it will only separate the body from the immortal soul, which, when escaped from its prison of earth, will wing its way to the mansions of eternal joy. O my Thirza, continued the dear departed saint, if I quit my dust before thee—before thee remove to bliss, short and moderate be thy grief: weep not long over my perishing clay. What are the days of this short life compared with eternity. We shall meet again in the realms of purity and joy, to part no more. Dearest Abel! I replied, while my tears flowed, neither if I first leave my dust, do thou give way to fruitless sorrow: shed not many tears over my senseless corpse. We shall, my love, be reunited; we shall together enjoy everlasting happiness: we shall meet—O ecstasy! never, never to part more!—O my soul sink not under thy Grief. Sublime are the consolations offered thee. Remember thy dignity—reflect on thine immortality!—look beyond the present calamity—rejoice in the salvation that awaits thee. Didst thou perish with the frail body where would be my hope?—what could
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alluage my sorrow?—well might I lament over this grave! well might I pray that an end might be put to my wretched being—but—I shall live for ever! I will rise above this dispiriting grief. Yes, my dearest husband! if thy ennobled soul—if thy angelic mind still retains any love, any concern for my happiness, thou wilt be pleased to know that thy precepts, thine example has inspired me with fortitude—has taught me to bear up under the unavoidable afflictions of mortality. Dear angel! if thou still hoverest over me, thou shalt be witness to my endeavours to repel this fruitless grief; but my tears still flow—I cannot yet command my sorrow. I must a little longer weep on this precious dust. I will erect round the grave an harbour of cypress: under the melancholy shade I will mourn my loss: but under it too will I contemplate, in holy transport, on the happy moment, when I shall meet my beloved; when, like him, I shall be free from all impurity, all sorrow, all sin, and eternally out of the reach of death. This ravishing prospect will—it does abate my anguish. She now arose from the grave, but instantly cried, sinking again on her knees, O horrid reflection!—our brother murdered him! O God of Goodness! hear my supplications: shew favour to the unhappy sinner; hear him when he cries to thee; destroy him not, O God! in thy wrath. Save him, O gracious God! save him from eternal perdition. My petitions for his final happiness shall ascend to thee in the early dawn. I will pray for him without ceasing. He is still my brother.

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Cain,

Cain, the prey of wild despair, lay trembling among the bushes. Fly, he cried to himself, fly these holy dwellings, odious monster! Ah, I cannot fly. I am surrounded by infernal horrors—Leave me, furies, leave me—Carry me, trembling feet, from this seat of virtue. I prophane the sacred place; alas, I cannot fly, my strength fails: a cold shivering has seized my limbs. Oh that these were the last tremblings of nature; unhappy that I am, I survive to feel encreasing anguish. How her lamentations pierce my soul! O Virtue, how sublime are thy consolations! all lost,—for ever lost to me. No hope remains—I have sinned beyond forgiveness—Ah, she prays! she prays for me: for me who have filled her heart with sorrow.—Unexampled goodness; ought she not rather to call down curses on my guilty head? O torture. Her virtue, her piety heightens my despair. My miseries are insupportable; my crime appears in all its magnitude. Not the apostate spirits in the lowest abyss of hell feel more horror—Thou pray for me, Thirza! thy rash vows are all superfluous—No, God will not hear thy prayers—he is just. Now she retires from the grave of her husband murdered by my hand. Dare I tread the same path?—dare I weep on the traces made by her feet? No—retire, barbarous fratricide, retire bloody murderer from the sanctified spot.—Fly, wretch, fly.—

Having thus spoke, he walked with hasty step, but suddenly stopping, he cried, O Mahala, how can I leave thee! how can I leave ye forever, O my children! I will in the dust deplore

deprecate my crime before you—before thee, Mahala. Perhaps thou now sheddest tears of compassion for my misery, perhaps thou wilt bless me still. But what do I say? cursed of God, who will dare to bless me. No, hate me, curse me, I deserve it—then I fly abhorred of all, loaded with the curse of God, and of all nature. Misery extreme? anguish insupportable! I have no power to fly—I come, I come, my dearest wife, to mourn before thee my guilty wretchedness. I will weep at thy feet—I will implore thee to forgive my having chased peace from thy heart, and filled thy days with sorrow. Then, yes then—I fly from thee, Mahala—I fly from you my children.

Cain now passed the grave, and advanced towards his cottage. He frequently stopped as irresolute; at length he came to his dwelling; but stood long without, pale and trembling. Then, with tottering and hesitating step, he passed the threshold.

Mahala was sitting on her solitary bed, gazing with weeping eyes at the pale moon, more pale herself than the star when enveloped in clouds. Her infants were crying round her. At the sight of her husband she gave a heart-piercing shriek, and fell on the bed senseless. The terrified infants grasped the knees of Cain, crying, O my father! help our dear mother; she is faint—she is sick with weeping for Abel—He is dead—Adam has put him in the ground, and covered him with dust. Why was you so long a coming home? You have worked a long while. Dear father! com-

fort our mother. Overcome by the conflict of his various passions, Cain could give no answer to his little ones. He embraced them. He hugged them in his arms, while his tears ran on their faces. Then unable to support his anguish, he fell on the earth, at the feet of his wife. The children now redoubled their cries, which awaked Mahala from her swoon. She saw her weeping husband on the earth.—O Cain, Cain! she cried in a voice of despair, tearing her dishevelled locks. Mahala interrupted Cain, my dear Mahala, forgive me!—pardon me, the murderer of thy borthor. This once let me cast myself in the dust at thy feet. Ah! I conjure thee to grant me this feeble consolation; this last hope of a misery that has no equal—only abstain from cursing me. Curse me not, O Mahala! I come to deplore before thee my misery and my guilt:—then I fly far from thee for ever. I will hide me in the desarts. Cursed of God, followed by his wrath, I fly. O curse me not; curse not thy wretched husband.

Ah Cain! she replied, penetrated with the tenderest compassion; tho' thou hast killed the best of brothers—tho' thou hast heaped inexpressible miseries on my wretched head, yet I forget not that thou art my husband. I pity—I weep for thee. Cain answered, casting on her a look of tenderness—a look that expressed the bitter anguish of his heart.—Fatal moment, when a dream from hell deceived me! These little ones appeared before me as slaves to the sons of Abel. To save them

them from misery and bondage, I killed him—
Curst moment! I murdered the best of brothers, and the bloody deed will forever haunt my mind, and fill it with infernal horrors. My punishment is eternal. Yet, O Mahala! I would escape thy curses. Curse me not, my dearest wife—Curse me not in my misery. This hour I fly—I quit thee for ever—quit ye for ever, my beloved children! I fly from ye, cursed by God and man.

The children lamented round him. They raised their innocent hands in agony. Mahala sunk on the earth, and reclined on her husband. Receive these tears—receive these expressions of my sincere forgiveness and compassion, she said, while she wept over him. Dost thou fly, Cain?—Dost thou fly to the desert regions? How can I dwell here while thou art solitary and abandoned—while thou art miserable far from me? No, Cain, I fly with thee. How can I suffer thee to be destitute of all relief in the deserts?—What cruel inquietudes would torment me? Every breeze I heard would fill me with terror! Perhaps he is now, I should say to myself, Perhaps he is at this instant in the agonies of death, without succour in some barren wild. She was silent, and Cain, with a look of astonishment, cry'd, What do I hear? Is it thou Mahala? is it thou thyself: or does a dream again deceive me? It is, it is my dear, my virtuous wife! Thy words Mahala, thy consolation words have softened my despair. Thou dost not hate me it is enough. No, thou courageous,

ous, thou affectionate wife! thou shalt never share in the punishment due to my horrid crime—thou shalt not suffer for me the chastisements of Heaven. Remain in this abode sanctified by virtue, where dwelleth the Divine Benediction. I will not render thee more miserable. Forget me Mahala,—forget thy wretched husband. Abandoned by God, I shall wander without peace or rest! but mayest thou be happy! mayest thou be blest! No, Cain, if thou art miserable, I cannot here be happy, replied Mahala. I fly with thee—with thee I wander—I will be desolate with thee—I go with thee to the desert regions. Our children shall go with us. I will there share thy misery—I will try to alluage it—I will mix my tears of compassion with thy tears of penitence—I will kneel by thy side.—My prayers shall ascend to heaven with thine, our children prostrate round us shall join their voices with ours, He will hear the prayer of the penitent.

O thou! cried Cain, by what name shall I call thee? Thou art to me as a gracious angel! A beam of divine consolation has darted into the obscurity of my soul! O Mahala! O my wife! now I dare embrace thee. O that I could make thee sensible of what I feel! but words cannot express my gratitude. At these words he pressed her to his breast; then suddenly quitting her, he embraced his children; but soon returned to his wife, and again clasped her to his heart.

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Now this tender mother, this heroic wife, soothed her infants, and wiped away their tears. She took her youngest child to her breast, another little one held by the hand of his father, while Eliel and Josiah, full of life and gaiety, tripped before them. Mahala, with weeping eyes, beheld the dwellings of her parents, and of Thirza. Be blest, be blest, said she, O desolate family whom I abandon! Soon will I return from the place of our habitation, to supplicate your blessings for me—for my dear, my penitent husband. I will solicit for him a pardon. She now wept as irresolute, when instantly exhalations, more balsamic than are breathed from all the flowers of spring, surrounded the fugitives, and the voice of an invisible angel from over their heads, said, Go generous wife, I will in a dream inform thy tender mother of thine heroic courage. I will tell her, thou art gone with thy penitent husband, to implore mercy for him from the Sovereign Judge.

They now walked by the light of the nocturnal star. They lost sight of the dwellings, and advanced into the desert regions where had never been imprinted the foot of man.

FINIS.

Reference is made to the fact that the above information was obtained from the files of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, and is not to be used for any purpose other than that for which it was originally intended.

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of a letter to the Hon. Mr. Justice

1948

